

Fall Fire Safety Tips

Save Lives

Fire safety is a year –round concern, but most fires happen in the fall and winter months. Here’s a roundup of fall fire safety tips to keep your family safe and sound.

Cozy up to a safe fireplace

Fireplaces are involved in thousands of home fires each year, according to the National Fire Protection Association. The association offers safety reminders before you toss a log on the fire. For example, have your chimney inspected annually and cleaned when needed. Creosote, the buildup of deposits, is a top reason for fireplace fires. In addition, cracks can allow poisonous carbon monoxide to seep into your home. And finally, a thorough inspection will remove any animals that may have built a home in your chimney during the summer. The fire protection association also suggests the use of fireplace screens to keep sparks from floating out. In addition, don’t leave your home or go out or go to bed with a fire left burning. And if you have a gas fireplace, have all the connections and lines checked. Finally be sure to burn only dry, seasoned hardwoods.

Change your clock and change your battery

It’s a rite of passage to change your clock in the fall, but it’s also time to change the batteries in your smoke alarms. Be sure there are working smoke alarms on each floor of your home, particularly outside of sleeping areas. Approximately 20 percent of alarms don’t work because of dead or missing batteries. In addition to replacing smoke alarm batteries every year, smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years. Marquette Township Fire Department has a **“SAFE AT HOME PROGRAM**, the Fire Department Provides **Free Smoke Detectors** to Marquette Township Residents. Fire Department personnel will even install your new smoke detectors for you if you wish! Our fire prevention division will conduct a free home safety inspection at any time.

Families should also keep – and learn how to select and use – a fire extinguisher in places where there’s a risk of fire, such as a home workshop or the kitchen. Install fire extinguishers near exits, and check them periodically according to manufacture’s specifications.

Have an escape plan in place

Be sure you have a family fire escape plan, and practice it regularly. Have an escape route for each area of your home and a designated meeting place outside. Draw a map of the escape plan and make it easy for all members of the family to understand. Train every one to stay low to the ground when escaping a fire. If you must travel through smoke to your exit, crawl and keep your head at level of 12-24 inches above the floor. Windows may provide a secondary means of escape from a burning home. For two-story homes, you may want to purchase a non-combustible escape ladder that’s tested and listed by an independent testing laboratory. Store the ladder permanently near the window. Escape ladders are available at most hardware stores. Buy one that hooks and hangs

away from the house, rather than right up against it. And practice deploying the ladder and that includes practicing how to use it from a first floor widow. A real fire is not the time to learn!

Keep Kids Safe From Fire

According to the National Fire Protection Association, 232 people were killed in 2007, and \$235 million in property was destroyed in fires attributed to children playing with fire. These are preventable fires. Here are some fire safety tips for every household with children.

- Store matches and cigarette lighters up high and out of sight and reach of children, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- Teach children to tell an adult if they find matches or lighters.
- Identify and eliminate fire and burn hazards in your home.
- Be a role model with such items as candles and fireplaces. Never play with fire. Children emulate adult behavior.
- Teach your children how to report an emergency. Post 9-1-1 stickers and other emergency numbers near your telephones.
- Have your children memorize their home telephone number and address, including city and state. Plus, teach them to get out first and then call for help.
- Teach the "stop, drop and roll" technique for cloths on fire. For those who use wheelchairs, learn how to use a rug or heavy fabric to smother flames.



Residents are encourage to call the Fire Department with any questions concerning Fire Safety, Home safety, our resident CPR program, Child Safety Seat Inspections or our "Beginning Baby Sitter" program. All of our services are provided Free of charge to Township residents. Call the department at 228-4296.

Thank you,

Ron DeMarse
Fire Marshal,

Marquette Township Fire and Rescue.