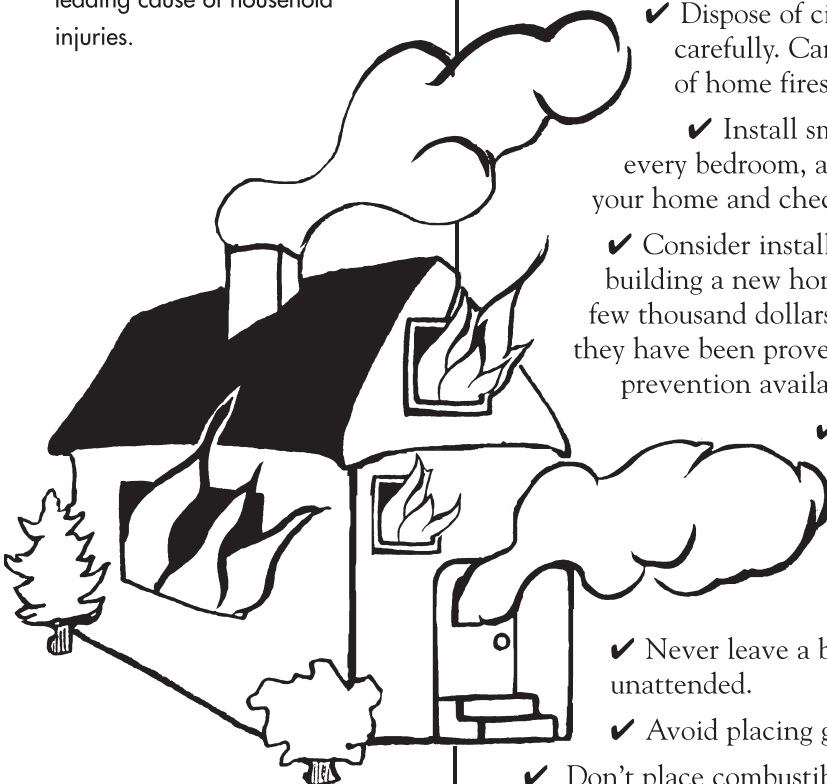


Fire & Electrical Safety

Fires and burns are the second leading cause of household injuries.



Healthy home tips on fire safety

- ✓ Dispose of cigarettes, cigars, and matches carefully. Careless smoking is a major cause of home fires.
- ✓ Install smoke detectors on each floor, in every bedroom, and in the basement and attic of your home and check the batteries monthly.
- ✓ Consider installing a sprinkler system when building a new home. These systems will add a few thousand dollars to your construction costs, but they have been proven to be the most effective fire prevention available.
- ✓ Plan at least two escape routes from each floor of your home and practice using them. Be sure you can open doors and windows from the inside without a key.
- ✓ Never leave a burning candle or fireplace unattended.
- ✓ Avoid placing grills on decks/under awnings.
- ✓ Don't place combustible materials such as laundry items or wood scraps near a furnace, water heater, or space heater.
- ✓ Don't use flammable chemicals in an enclosed space, especially near an appliance that has a pilot light.
- ✓ Have your furnace, gas and fuel appliances, and chimney inspected annually. Some utility companies provide free or low cost inspections. Otherwise contact a heating professional to schedule an inspection.
- ✓ Clean lint traps in clothes dryers after each use.
- ✓ Don't touch someone who has been electrocuted. First make sure electricity has been turned off. Otherwise, you could be a casualty yourself.

- ✓ Know how to prevent and extinguish kitchen fires. If a fire occurs, don't panic. For oven fires, close the door and turn off the oven. Use a pot lid to smother a stovetop fire. Keep an ABC-rated fire extinguisher near the kitchen and check it annually to see whether it needs to be replaced or refilled.
- ✓ Keep combustibles away from stovetops.
- ✓ Avoid distractions when you are cooking. Have someone else answer the telephone or door. If you must leave the kitchen, turn off all burners until you return.
- ✓ Prevent scalds by setting the thermostat on your water heater to 120 degrees or lower. Install anti-scald devices in each bathtub or shower.
- ✓ Know emergency telephone numbers for your area. In most regions, 911 will reach an emergency operator. Post this number near each telephone in your home. Teach children the emergency number.

Protect children from fires and burns.

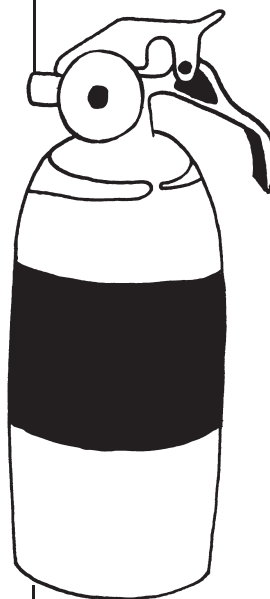
- ✓ Teach children about the dangers of playing with matches or lighters. Store these items out of the sight and reach of small children.
- ✓ Teach your children what to do if they smell smoke or if the smoke detector alarm sounds.
- ✓ Have children practice escaping from a "pretend fire."
- ✓ Never leave young children alone. Many fatal fires have been started by children who were left unsupervised.
- ✓ Use the rear burner of the stove and always turn the handles inward so they are not accessible to toddlers.
- ✓ Keep the cords for crockpots, coffee makers, and deep fryers above the counter and out of the reach of small children.

Fire and burn prevention

Each year nearly 4,000 U.S. residents die in home fires. Thousands of others are injured as a result of fires or accidental burns. Most of these deaths involve children and elderly adults.

Most fatal fires occur in private homes. Kitchen accidents, space heaters, chimney fires, faulty electrical systems, and carelessly discarded cigarettes are common causes.

Check your home for fire hazards and install smoke detectors on every floor.



Electrical safety

We use electricity every day to power our refrigerators, radios, televisions, and hairdryers.

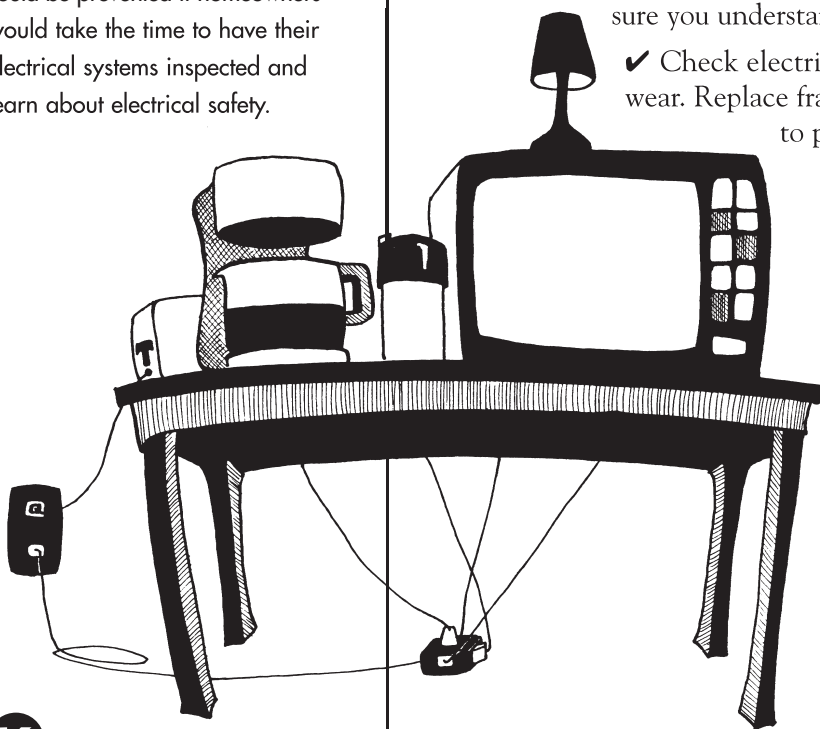
While enjoying the convenience of these appliances, we tend to forget that they can also cause shocks and fires if mishandled.

From 1999 to 2002, electrical plugs, cords, switches, and outlets were involved in 32,000 home fires, resulting in nearly 240 deaths on average per year.

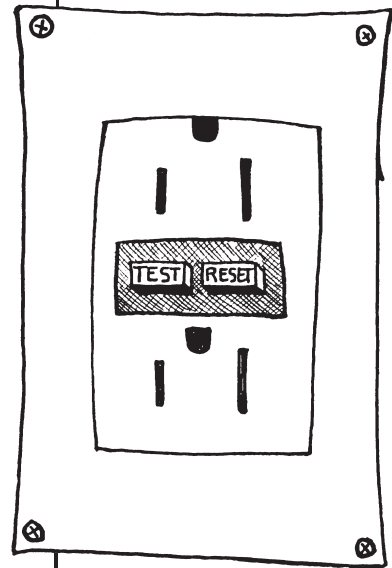
Most electrical fires and injuries could be prevented if homeowners would take the time to have their electrical systems inspected and learn about electrical safety.

Healthy home tips on electrical safety

- ✓ Have the wiring in your home inspected. Owners and buyers of homes that are more than 10 years old should consider an inspection. If your home is more than 40 years old, an inspection is overdue. Hire a licensed electrician to correct any problems found by the inspector.
- ✓ Install ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlets in the kitchen, bathroom, and laundry area of your home. Test these outlets monthly to make sure they are working properly.
- ✓ Never place electrical cords under rugs or bedding. Heat or sparks from these cords could cause a fire.
- ✓ Follow the safety instructions that are provided with new electrical appliances. Pay attention to safety markings on electrical equipment and be sure you understand them.
- ✓ Check electrical cords for signs of wear. Replace frayed or cracked cords to prevent shocks and fires.



- ✓ Use the right sized light bulb and fuse. Check labels on light fixtures and lamps to see what size bulb to use. Check the label on your fuse box to be sure that fuses are the correct size for the circuit.
- ✓ Pay attention to electrical problems and take corrective action. Frequently blown fuses, tripped circuit breakers, shocks and hot electrical switches are warnings that something is wrong with your electrical system or with an appliance in your home.
- ✓ Hire a licensed professional to make repairs or modifications to your home's electrical system.
- ✓ Install cover plates on all electrical outlets and switches. Cover unused outlets with plastic plugs.
- ✓ Use 3-pronged plugs properly. The third prong is there because the appliance must be grounded to prevent electrical shocks.
- ✓ Take cover during an electrical storm. The safest place to be is in a building or car. If you are indoors, stay away from open windows and doors and use the telephone only in an emergency. If you are outdoors during a storm, stay away from water, trees, and metal objects like golf clubs, jewelry, and keys. Avoid low areas that might flood in a heavy rain.
- ✓ Be aware not to overload outlets. Extension cords shouldn't be used as permanent fixtures in home rebuilding.



Ground fault circuit interrupter

A ground fault circuit interrupter or GFCI is a special type of electrical outlet that is designed to prevent electrical shocks. These outlets are recommended for areas where water is used.

Install GFCIs in bathrooms, kitchens (within 6 feet of the sink), laundry areas, garages, and basements. GFCIs are also recommended for outdoor outlets, and around pools, saunas, and hot tubs.