

Home Fire Prevention

One of the best ways to prevent fire in the home is to do a home inspection specifically looking for the fire hazards or preparing for emergency measures in case of a fire. All electrical appliances and tools should have a testing agency label. Have the appliances repaired if they aren't working properly. If an appliance gets wet, have it serviced.

Inspect Your Home One Section at a Time

Kitchen

- Check the cords on all appliances. If they are worn or frayed, have them repaired
- Don't overload the outlets
- Make sure appliance cords are kept on the counter to prevent them from being pulled down by young children
- Don't store things over the stove. People get burned while reaching
- Turn pot handles so children can't pull them down
- Wear tight sleeves when cooking. Loose-fitting garments can catch fire
- Check to see if curtains or towel racks are close to the stove
- Check to see if the stove and oven are clean of grease and oil
- Be sure a fire extinguisher is placed in the kitchen. The Grosse Pointe Woods Public Safety Department recommends a minimum 2A10BC extinguisher
- All cleaning products and other chemicals should be stored out of the reach of young children, not under the sink. Cleaning products and other chemicals also should be stored separately from foods
- Be sure microwave ovens have room to "breathe," all the vents are cleared of obstructions
- Never leave the home with a pot cooking on the stove

Living Room/Family Room

- Be sure portable space heaters are at least three feet away from anything that can catch fire including walls and curtains
- Use a metal or glass fireplace screen. Have the chimney checked and cleaned regularly
- Put lighters and matches where small children won't find them
- Too small or too full ashtrays are no good. Ashtrays should be large, deep and emptied frequently, but only when all signs of heat and burning are gone

- Before going to bed, look under cushions for burning cigarettes. Check carpeting where ashtrays have been used
- Allow plenty of air space around the TV and stereo to prevent overheating. If these appliances are not working correctly, be sure to have them repaired. In the meantime, unplug them
- Check for worn or frayed extension cords or other electrical cords
- Extension cords should not run under rugs and carpets or be looped over nails or other sharp objects that could cause them to fray
- Check for overloaded outlets or extension cords
- Do not use extension cords in place of permanent wiring
- Electrical sockets should be covered with a child-proof fitting
- Lamp and light fixtures should be used with bulbs with wattage at or below maximum prescribed by the manufacturer

Bathroom

- Check for overloaded extension cords and outlets
- Don't place or use any appliances near water
- Make sure all medicines and cosmetics are kept out of the reach of small children. Install safety latches on drawers, cupboards and medicine cabinets if the home has small children
- Dump old or outdated medicine into the toilet

Bedrooms

- Smoke detectors should be tested regularly to be sure they are functioning correctly
- You should have smoke detectors in all bedrooms and on all floors
- Replace smoke detectors every ten years
- Have a working flashlight next to each bed
- Again, check for overloaded outlets, extension cords and heaters that are too close to combustible items
- Each member of the family should know what to do in the event of a fire
- Do all family members know the fire escape plan?
- Practice your fire escape plan
- Plan two escapes from each bedroom in case of a fire
- If you smoke, DO NOT smoke in bed

Basement, Garage and Storage

- Store gasoline and other flammables in tight metal containers. Don't use flammable liquids near heat, a pilot light or while smoking
- Have heating equipment checked yearly

- Clean up workbench
- If a fuse blows, find the problem. Be sure to replace a fuse with one the correct size
- Don't store things near the furnace or heater
- Get rid of stored newspaper or other rubbish. Newspapers stored in a damp, warm place may ignite spontaneously
- Oily, greasy rags should be kept in labeled and sealed non-glass containers, preferably metal
- Keep all chemicals, paints, etc. in their original containers
- Set your water heater at 130 degrees Fahrenheit

Outdoors

- Don't ever use gasoline on a grill. Once the fire has been started, never use lighter fluid or gasoline. Use dry kindling to revive the fire
- Move the lawnmower and snow blower away from gasoline fumes before starting. Allow the engine to cool before refueling
- Install a lightning protection system
- Don't store more of anything than is needed