

# Fire Safety for Mobile Homes



Three times as many people die in mobile home fires, proportionately, than in single and two-family home fires. For every 1,000 fires that break out, 21 victims will die in mobile homes while fewer than seven will die in single or two-family dwellings.

The primary cause of the problem is that fire spreads rapidly through mobile home contents, while the structure itself intensifies heat and smoke buildup. In addition, most mobile homes have fewer safe exits than a traditional home.

If you live in a mobile home, precautions can be taken. Be cautious and alert to prevent fire in your mobile home.

First, if you smoke, be extremely careful with smoking materials. Never smoke in bed. If you're feeling tired, don't even smoke in that big, comfortable easy chair. Always use large ashtrays that have plenty of room for your cigarette or cigar, and use an ashtray that won't tip over.

Use caution when cooking. Keep pot handles turned away from the room.

Don't overload electric outlets. Mobile home fires are caused by problems in the electrical system twice as frequently as in traditional houses. Protect yourself by monitoring your electrical use. When one powerful electrical appliance is in use, for example an iron, keep the use of others to a minimum. And never leave electrical appliances operating unattended.

Don't leave children unsupervised, even for a quick trip to a neighbor's home or to the store. It takes only a few seconds for curiosity to turn to tragedy, and once a fire starts in a mobile

home, it is likely to be deadly. Fire will spread rapidly, trapping the child. By the time you return home, it may be too late.

Be sure you have enough smoke detectors and that they are in working condition. You should have a smoke detector outside every bedroom area. If your bedrooms are located at different ends of your mobile home, that means you need two detectors, one to shield each bedroom area from fires that might start in the rest of the structure. If a smoker lives or is a frequent visitor in your home, install an extra detector near where he or she usually smokes.

Test smoke detectors monthly. Press the test button and blow some smoke into the detector to check its batteries and its quickness in sensing smoke. Don't leave your family's safety to chance. Remember to replace the batteries in your smoke detectors at least once a year.