

Meridian Fire Department

Bureau of Fire Prevention

FIRE SAFETY FACT SHEET: General Fire Safety

EVERY 20 SECONDS, a fire department somewhere in the United States responds to a fire. Most fires do not happen in homes; but most fire deaths and injuries do. The most common causes of home fire deaths are misplaced or misused smoking materials, heating equipment, and kitchen related hazards. Accidents don't cause fires people do. Here are some things you can do to limit the chance for fire in your home and improve you and your family's chance of surviving a fire emergency.

Clearly post your house numbers so that in the event of an emergency fire units and other emergency vehicles can locate your home quickly. Make sure that the numbers posted are easy to read and **at least 4-inches tall**. Be sure that your address numbers can be seen clearly after dark.

Pay attention to your cooking. Keep pot handles turned inward and keep your cooking area free of clutter and grease build-up. Do not wear loose clothing while cooking over open heat (this includes electric ranges also). And finally never leave cooking food on the stove un-attended. If you must leave use a timer to remind you.

Practice electrical safety. Have a professional electrician inspect your home's electrical wiring system every 10 years. Discard appliances and other electronic devices with frayed wiring. Do not run wires or extension cords across heavy traffic areas, under rugs, or carpeting. And finally avoid over-loading outlets with too many devices or appliances.

Heat your home safely. Have a professional service all heating equipment annually; keep the area around heating devices free of any materials that can burn or become explosive.

Install Carbon Monoxide detectors, if you have gas heating or appliances. CO (Carbon Monoxide) is odorless, tasteless, & colorless and can kill you.

Keep matches & lighters away from children. Store matches and or lighters in locations that little hands cannot get to such as a high cabinet or a locked drawer.

Smoke Alarms save lives! Place a smoke alarm on every level of your home, near bedrooms, and in the basement. Avoid installing smoke alarms in or near the kitchen, outside door, or fire place; installing smoke alarms in these locations may result in false alarms. Smoke alarms should be tested monthly and batteries should be replaced annually. Discard Smoke Alarms after 8-years.

Know what to do in case of fire. Conduct home fire drills regularly and know 2 ways out of every room if possible. As soon as you discover a fire get low and get out. Have a designated meeting place for family members. Once you are out of the house stay out and call the fire department from a neighbor's or from your cell phone if you have one.

DIAL 911, for all emergencies.