



Fire Safe Seniors

# How to Prevent Fires in Your Home

*Home fires are often caused by smoking, cooking, and heating in the home.  
You can prevent fires by following these tips:*

## IF YOU SMOKE...



- Never smoke when you are lying down, drowsy, or in bed. Smoking is the #1 cause of home fires that kill older adults.
- Use large, deep, tip-resistant ashtrays and place them on a flat surface. This will keep ashes from falling onto a nearby area that might burn.
- Wet cigarette butts and ashes before emptying them into the trash.
- Smoke outside, if possible.
- Never smoke near oxygen tanks.

## IF YOU COOK BY USING THE STOVE...



- Keep an eye on what you fry. Most cooking fires start when someone is frying food.
- Wear short sleeves or roll them up so they don't catch on fire.
- Move things that can burn away from the stove.
- Don't cook if you are drowsy from alcohol or medicine.
- Use oven mitts to handle hot pans.
- If a pan of food catches fire, slide a lid over it and turn off the burner.

## IF YOU USE A SPACE HEATER...



- Keep the heater 3 feet away from anything that can burn, including you.
- Unplug heaters when you aren't using them, including when you leave your home or go to bed.
- Consider getting heaters that are designed to turn off if they tip over.

## IF YOU USE A FIREPLACE, WOOD STOVE, OR COAL STOVE...



- Have a professional clean and inspect your fireplace, wood stove, or coal stove once a year. Look in the phone book under "chimney cleaning" to find a professional near you.
- Do not burn green wood, artificial logs, boxes, or trash.
- Use a metal mesh fireplace screen to keep sparks inside.
- If your fireplace has glass doors, leave them open while burning a fire.



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