

Fire Prevention Tips

Preventing fires is a year-round responsibility for adults and a positive family activity, especially during fire prevention month. Get in the habit of changing your smoke detector battery regularly. The end of Daylight Saving Time this month presents a good opportunity to change your clocks and change your batteries, too. Make fire prevention a family habit throughout the year. Check the web site for a complete list of safety suggestions. For more info, call the Fire Department at (864) 231-2256.

- Never leave cooking food on the stovetop unattended, and keep a close eye on food cooking inside the oven. This is the number one cause of house fires in Anderson.
- Keep cooking areas clean and clear of materials that could catch fire, such as pot-holders, towels, rags, drapes and food packaging.
- Give space heaters plenty of space. Space heaters should be at least three feet away from anything that could burn. Always make sure to turn heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.
- Solid-fueled heating equipment, including chimneys, chimney connectors, fireplaces, and wood or coal stoves should be inspected by a professional every year and cleaned as often as necessary. This also applies to all other types of fueled heating equipment, including central furnaces and space heaters.
- Lit candles should be monitored constantly by an adult and extinguished when adults leave the room or go to sleep. Never leave children alone with burning candles. NFPA recommends against allowing children to have candles in their bedrooms.
- If there are smokers in your home, make sure ashtrays are large and deep and won't tip over. Douse cigarette and cigar butts with water before discarding them in a trash can.
- Keep matches and lighters up high and out of children's sight and reach.
- Do not use any electrical device with a loose, frayed, or broken cord.
- In homes with small children, receptacle outlets should have plastic safety covers.
- To reduce the risk of electrical shock, install GFCIs (ground-fault circuit-interrupters). GFCIs shut off faulty electrical circuits and equipment more quickly than conventional fuses or circuit breakers. The devices are inexpensive and can be hard-wired into your home's electrical system by a professional electrician.
- Unwanted electrical arcing, often occurring in damaged wires or cords, can generate high temperatures and cause a fire. AFCIs (arc-fault circuit-interrupters) protect against fire by continuously monitoring the electrical current in a circuit and will shut off a circuit when an unwanted arcing fault is detected.
- Liquids like gasoline, kerosene, and propane are highly flammable. Make sure to store these liquids outside the home in a properly ventilated shed or garage. Store them only in small quantities and in their original containers or in safety containers. Never bring even a small amount of gasoline indoors. The vapors are highly flammable and can be ignited by a tiny spark.
- In the hands of an adult who knows how to use it, a portable fire extinguisher can save lives and minimize property damage by putting out a small fire or containing it until the fire department arrives. But never forget that fire spreads rapidly. Your first priority should always be to get out of the house.
- Replace the batteries in your smoke alarms once a year, or as soon as the alarm "chirps," warning that the battery is low. Helpful hint: schedule battery replacements for the same day you change your clock from daylight to standard time in the fall.
- Regularly vacuuming or dusting your smoke alarm following manufacturer's instructions can help keep it working properly.
- Replace your smoke alarms once every 10 years.
- Never "borrow" a battery from a smoke alarm.
- Make sure that everyone in your home can hear and recognize the sound of the alarm and knows how to react immediately.