



**PUBLIC EDUCATION  
SECTION**



***HOT TOPICS***  
FIRE SAFETY INFORMATION SHEET

**Fire Safety While Working & Learning Remotely**

With the increase of people working and leaning remotely from home, the division and local responders are urging everyone to use added fire safety and caution around the home. daily routines continue to be far from normal and the added stress of the pandemic can result in normal safety practices being forgot or fall by the wayside. A fire can start in seconds and spread in minutes.

As people continue to stay at home during this pandemic, it's critical that they recognize where potential fire hazards exist and what can be done to prevent a fire from starting. By incorporating a few simple safety practices for the whole family, you can help reduce the chances of injury and fire breaking out in your home.



**Smoke & Carbon Monoxide (CO) Alarms**

Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of the home. Install alarms in the basement. Larger homes may require additional smoke alarms to provide a minimum level of protection.



Install Carbon Monoxide alarms outside each separate sleeping area, on every level of the home, and in other locations as required by laws, codes, or standards.

Test smoke & CO alarms at least once a month using the test button.



Make sure everyone in the home understands the sound of the smoke alarm and knows how to respond.

Follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning to keep smoke & CO alarms working.

Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.

Replace any smoke & CO alarm that does not respond after a new battery has been installed.

**Cooking**

Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, boiling, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.



If you are simmering, baking, or roasting food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you are cooking.

Keep anything that can catch fire — oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels or curtains — away from your stovetop.



Make sure all handles are turned inward, away from where someone can grab a hot handle or tip a pan over.

Be on alert. If you are sleepy or have consumed alcohol, refrain from using the stove or stovetop.

If you have young children in your home, create a "kid-free zone" of at least 3 feet (1 meter) around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

**Heating**

Keep anything that can burn at least three feet (one meter) away from heating equipment, like the furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater.



Have a three-foot (one meter) "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters.

Never use your oven to heat your home.

Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.

Always use the right kind of fuel, specified by the manufacturer, for fuel burning space heaters.

Have you chimney cleaned and inspected by a qualified person in the spring and the fall.



Install and maintain carbon monoxide (CO) alarms to avoid the risk of CO poisoning. If you smell gas in your gas heater, do not light the appliance. Leave the home immediately and call your local fire department or gas company.

## Electrical Safety

Make sure you don't overload the outlets in your home workspace

Electrical work should be done only by a qualified electrician.



Only use one heat-producing appliance (such as a coffee maker, toaster, space heater, etc.) plugged into a receptacle outlet at a time.

Major appliances (refrigerators, dryers, washers, stoves, air conditioners, microwave ovens, etc.) should be plugged directly into a wall receptacle outlet. Extension cords and plug strips should not be used.

Check electrical cords to make sure they are not running across doorways or under carpets. Extension cords are intended for temporary use.



Use a light bulb with the right number of watts. There should be a sticker that indicates the right number of watts.

Replace wall outlets if plugs do not fit snugly or the wall outlet does not accept plugs with one blade larger than the other.

Never touch a downed power line. You could be injured or electrocuted. Assume that all power lines are live. Stay at a safe distance.

## Lithium Ion Batteries

Lithium ion batteries supply power to many kinds of devices, including smart phones, laptops, scooters, e-cigarettes, smoke alarms, and toys. Handle these batteries carefully. In rare instances, they can cause a fire or explosion.



When charging smartphones and other digital devices, only use the charging cord that came with the device.

Do not charge a device under your pillow, on your bed or on a couch.

Do not place lithium ion batteries in direct sunlight or keep them in hot vehicles.

Many hover boards have been linked to fires. Some of these fires have involved the lithium battery charger. Exercise caution if you are using these devices.

## Home Fire Escape Planning

An emergency can happen at any time, make sure everyone in your home knows the sound and understands the warning of the smoke and CO alarm and knows how to respond.

Make a home escape plan. Draw a map of each level of the home. Show all doors and windows. Go to each room and point to the two ways out. Practice the plan with everyone in your household, including visitors.



Children, older adults, and people with disabilities may need assistance to wake up and get out. Make sure that someone will help them.

Know at least two ways out of every room, if possible. Make sure all doors and windows that lead outside open.



Teach your children how to escape on their own in case you cannot help them. Make sure they can open windows, remove screens, and unlock doors.

If you sleep with the bedroom door closed, install smoke alarms inside and outside the bedroom. For the best protection, make sure all smoke alarms are interconnected. When one smoke alarm sounds, they all sound.

Have an outside meeting place (something permanent, like a tree, light pole, or mailbox) a safe distance in front of the home where firefighters will easily find you.

## Other Home Office Tips

Place your computer screen at arm's length away with the top third at eye level.



Adjust your chair so your feet are flat on the floor and your lower back is supported.

Use extra lighting for close-up tasks.

If you use a laptop as your primary work computer, consider adding a separate monitor, keyboard, and mouse.



Clear away tripping hazards, such as loose cords.

Take regular breaks to walk, stretch, and rest your eyes.