

Other fire safety brochures are available from the New York State Department of State Office of Fire Prevention and Control.

Contact your local fire department.



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Photo by Richard P. Wersinger, Brighton, NY Fire Department  
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# Home Fire Safety Tips



## Smoke Detectors and Home Escape Plans

- **Working** smoke detectors give you early warning of a fire and more than double your chance of surviving a fire.
- In a fire, **seconds count**; they could mean the difference between life and death.
- **Install** smoke detectors in every home, on every level, outside each sleeping area and in each bedroom.
- **Test** your detectors each month to make sure they are working.
- **Change** your battery twice a year. When you change your clocks in the Spring and Fall, change your battery.
- **Replace** your detectors with new ones after ten years.
- When the smoke detector alarm sounds, **get out fast!** Call the fire department from a neighbor's house or other safe location.
- **Plan** your escape. Know **two ways out** of every room.
- **Once out, stay out.**
- Have **family fire drills** at least twice a year.



For more information, send for our companion brochures, *Smoke Detectors and Exit Drills In The Home* (EDITH).

# Cooking Safety

Put a Lid on



Grease Fires

- If you leave stovetop cooking unattended, you're asking for a fire, especially when hot oil or frying is involved.
- If you have a stovetop grease fire, turn off the burner and cover the pan with a lid to cut off oxygen to the fire. Let the pan cool before removing the lid. Never try to take a burning pan to the sink and NEVER use water on a grease fire. Use a fire extinguisher only if you know how; if you stand too close, you'll only spread the flaming grease all over the kitchen.
- For an oven fire, turn off the oven and keep the oven door closed until the fire is out and the oven cools.
- Never leave the oven door open to heat the room. The oven can overheat and cause a fire.

# Wood Stoves and Fireplaces

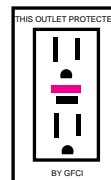
- Have your chimney and fireplace cleaned and inspected yearly for creosote build-up, cracks, crumbling bricks or mortar and any obstructions. This is best done by a professional chimney sweep.
- Burn only dry, well seasoned hardwood to minimize creosote. Don't burn trash.
- Place ashes outdoors in a covered metal container at least three feet away from anything that burns. Don't set the container on a wood porch floor or any other combustible surface.
- Always use a fireplace screen made of sturdy metal or heat-tempered glass to prevent sparks from escaping. If you have children, use a child-guard screen as a barrier for your wood stove.

# Space Heaters Need Space

- Keep at least 36 inches of empty space between the heater and everything else, like furniture, curtains, papers and people.
- Check the cord on any portable electric heater. If the cord gets hot, or is frayed or cracked, have the heater serviced.
- Never use extension cords with portable electric heaters.
- Turn off portable heaters when family members leave the house or are sleeping.
- An adult should always be present when a space heater is used around children.
- Make sure your portable electric heater is UL approved and has a temperature control and tip-over shut off protection.

# Electrical Safety

- Overloaded outlets with multiple outlets or extension cords cause fires.
- Buy UL listed extension cords. Make sure the cord is the proper length for the job and designed to handle the current or wattage of the products being used.
- Don't cut or splice cords for any reason. A splice is a cord's weakest point; using electrical tape doesn't make a splice safe.
- Electrical cords should never be run under rugs or bundled up to take up excess. This can cause the cord to overheat.
- Properly cover unused outlets to prevent accidental shock.



- Install ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI's) to protect all outside outlets and anywhere else water is present, such as outlets in bathrooms and near kitchen sinks.

# Kerosene Heaters

**In New York State, unvented portable kerosene heaters may only be used:**

- in one- and two-family homes; or
- temporarily, in construction or demolition projects.

**Remember:**

- Follow manufacturer's instructions for operation and refueling.
- Always provide adequate ventilation.
- Never refuel a kerosene heater when it is still hot.
- Always refuel a kerosene heater outdoors away from the house, never on a porch or in a garage.

**THE LEADING CAUSE OF KEROSENE HEATER FIRES IS UNSAFE REFUELING.**