

Dear Colestin Rural Fire District Resident,

We are providing the following information to help you have a peaceful, fire-safe holiday and winter season. We urge you to (re)familiarize yourself with as much of it as possible, and to remember and use the fire safety tips.

We realize that there is a lot of information here; however, we haven't sent out anything comprehensively covering winter home fire safety for 7 years. This information is current and will remain useful for some time; please save this pamphlet for your future reference. Our website at www.crfd.org also provides information on these topics and much more. Please call us at (541) 488-1768 with any questions. Thank you for participating in home fire protection and prevention, and have a safe holiday and winter season!



With the strong El Nino this year, we could have significant winter weather. We urge you to prepare for the unexpected, including heavy amounts of snow. In case you get snowed in, your pipes freeze, or your power goes out, **have enough food, water, and any needed medications to get by for at least a week.** That means one gallon of water per person per day, and ready-to-eat, non-perishable foods. (Food in the fridge stays good for approx. four hours without power.) Also have flashlights, a NOAA weather radio, extra batteries, a first aid kit, food and water for pets, and if possible, a portable generator. A portable sump pump is also useful in case of home flooding.

Stock your vehicle with winter survival gear: water, snacks, portable cell phone/device charger, blankets, warm clothes, gloves, boots, flashlight and extra batteries, radio and extra batteries, a basic tool kit, tire chains, road salt and sand or kitty litter, a shovel and ice scraper, jumper cables, tarp, first aid kit, sanitation supplies, and any necessary medications. Have your vehicle serviced before winter travel; during winter, keep the gas tank full.

If you must travel in winter weather, check ODOT (or CalTrans) for current road conditions before travel and pay attention to weather updates; avoid roads, mountain passes and back-country roads that are notoriously dangerous in winter, and tell someone of your travel plans. Start out with a full gas tank and a fully charged cell phone, but don't rely on cell phones to always have service. If you are stranded in a storm, stay in your vehicle, and *never run your engine for heat with the windows up, since carbon monoxide poisoning has no smell and can be lethal.*

Also, since your family may not all be together when a weather event or other emergency occurs, **have a communications plan, including an out-of-area contact** you can each check in with if local phone service is lost.

(Continued inside)

COLESTIN RURAL FIRE DISTRICT 4-210
www.crfd.org 541-488-1768
1701 COLESTIN ROAD
ASHLAND, OR. 97520

**Our fundraising shirts and hats
make great gifts – see online for details.**

*You can always find the latest information
about what's going on in our district
on our website at: www.crfd.org.*

To:



**Test your smoke alarms
once a month.**

A smoke alarm can save your life in a fire. Use the test button to make sure your smoke alarms are working.



postage

The Oregon OEM suggests taking the opportunity to discuss this with your family members if you are together during the holidays. Our website has a lot more information and resources to help you prepare.

LOCAL ROAD SAFETY: Speeding on Colestin Road is both illegal and highly dangerous. Please **observe posted speed limits and slow down around blind curves or dips (low areas)**. Also, **drive only on the right side (lane) of the road – not in the center**. This warning is in response to some near-misses in recent months: We don't want to be responding to serious medical incidents that can be avoided. Please DRIVE SAFELY.

Basic winter reminders: Keep your residences as accessible as possible. If we can't reach you during a fire or medical situation, we may not be able to help you at all. Fire district response time can be complicated by snow/ice on roads and at residences. Provide strategic turnouts so two vehicles can pass, and turn-around space at your residence. **If you have a locked gate**, please provide us with a combination so we don't have to force entry. That information is held as confidential for emergency response only.

Tree hazards: Prepare by trimming or thinning trees and branches near/over your driveway or access road that could fall under a snow load. Hire professionals if necessary; if you need help, call us. Be alert to the possibility of suddenly falling trees during or after heavy precipitation, when soils may become saturated enough to loosen root systems. ***If power lines are involved with a fallen tree, call us first.*** Power companies are NOT responsible for fallen trees – property owners are – but power lines are very dangerous and need special handling. We will assist you to locate a qualified professional to deal with it.

Winterize your house to prevent frozen pipes. Frozen pipes can be inconvenient, disastrous and can take fire sprinkler systems out of service. Take action now to prevent this by heeding **some basic tips:**

- ▶ Drain water from outside hoses and disconnect them from the faucets. Close valves supplying outside hose bibs, and then let the hose bib drain. Keep the outside valve open to allow any freezing water to expand.
- ▶ Check unheated spaces for exposed pipes and protect them with pipe sleeves or UL listed heat tape.
- ▶ When concerned about the possibility of freezing pipes, allow cold water to drip from the exposed pipes.
- ▶ Do not turn off the heat in your home. Keep your thermostat set at no less than 55 degrees F even when travelling away from your home.

Have a home escape plan and practice it.

If a fire starts, you may have just two minutes to get to safety. Yet:

- ▶ According to an NFPA survey, only one-third of Americans have both developed and practiced a home fire escape plan.
- ▶ Almost three-quarters of Americans do have an escape plan; however, more than half never practiced it.
- ▶ One-third (32%) of survey respondents who made an estimate thought they would have at least 6 minutes before a fire in their home would become life threatening. The time available is often less. Only 8% said their first thought on hearing a smoke alarm would be to get out!

The best way to survive a fire inside a building is to get out fast.

- ▶ Identify *two* ways to escape from each room in your home and be sure that every member of your household knows them.
- ▶ Decide where to meet once you get outside. Your meeting place should be where firefighters (or others) can find you and know that you're safe.
- ▶ Practice your fire escape plan: Practice your escape routes with family members at least twice a year, during the day and at night. Practice low crawling. Time your fire drills and find out: what's your escape time?

If a fire starts in your home:

- ▶ **Stop, Drop And Roll:** If your clothes catch fire, don't run! **Stop** where you are, cover your face with your hands, **drop** to the ground and **roll** over to smother the flames. Teach all household members to stop, drop and roll.
- ▶ **Stay Low And Go!** Smoke is dangerous and can be toxic. It is the culprit that claims more lives than the fire that makes it. Try to avoid smoky ways out, but if you have no choice and have to escape through smoke, get down and crawl as low as you can to find the best remaining air as you escape. *Get low and go.*
- ▶ **Get out to safety and stay out. Do not re-enter for any reason.**
- ▶ **Call 9-1-1 from outside your home.**

Thanks to the City of Ashland for the above information on avoiding frozen pipes; to Jackson County Fire District 5 for contributing information on Home Fire Safety tips; to the Jackson County Sheriff's Dept. and the Oregon OEM for winter weather, travel safety and emergency preparation tips; and to FEMA, the USFA and the NFPA for extensive information on home fires and home fire safety, winter pet care, winter holiday fire safety, cooking safety, electrical and appliance safety, smoke alarms and fire escape plans.

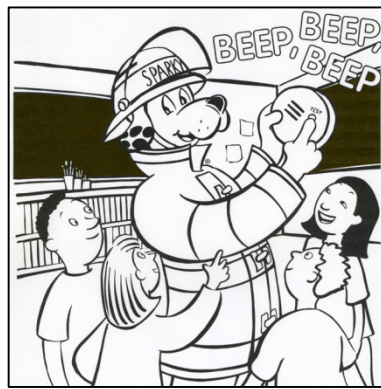
Maintain and test your smoke alarms:

They can't protect you if they don't work!

- ▶ Smoke alarms should be maintained according to manufacturer's instructions.
- ▶ Test smoke 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 manufacturer's instructions for cleaning to keep smoke alarms working well. The instructions are included in the package or can be found on the internet. Also keep them free of dust and cobwebs with compressed canned air or use a vacuum.
- ▶ Smoke alarms with non-replaceable 10-year batteries are designed to remain effective for up to 10 years. If the alarm chirps, warning that the battery is low, replace the entire smoke alarm right away.
- ▶ Smoke alarms with any other type of battery need a new battery at least once a year. If that alarm chirps, warning the battery is low, replace the battery right away.
- ▶ When replacing a battery, follow manufacturer's list of batteries on the back of the alarm or manufacturer's instructions. Manufacturer's instructions are specific to the batteries (brand and model) that must be used. The smoke alarm may not work properly if a different kind of battery is used.
- ▶ Replace all back-up batteries in hard-wired smoke alarms at least once a year or when the alarm chirps (an indicator of a low battery).

Replacing your smoke alarms:

- ▶ Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old. To determine the age of your smoke alarm, look at the back where you will find the date of manufacture. Smoke alarms should be replaced 10 years from the date of manufacture.
- ▶ Immediately replace any smoke alarm that does not respond properly when tested.
- ▶ Replace combination smoke-carbon monoxide alarms according to the manufacturer's recommendations.



Sparky the Fire Dog – www.sparky.org

Winter Care for Pets:

- ▶ **Protect paws from salt.** This and other chemicals used to melt snow and ice can irritate the pads of your pet's feet. Wipe off their paws with a damp towel before your pet licks them and irritates his/her mouth.
- ▶ **Keep pets warm and indoors.** No matter the temperature, windchill can threaten a pet's life. Pets are sensitive to severe cold and are at risk for frostbite when outdoors during extreme cold snaps; and
- ▶ **Avoid antifreeze poisoning.** Antifreeze has a sweet taste that may attract animals but is a deadly poison. Wipe up any spills, and don't allow pets to wander unattended near driveways, garages or other places when they may come into contact with antifreeze.

REMINDER: During especially cold weather, make sure you keep your pets inside – "If it's too cold for you, it's too cold for them).

Home Fires: A few statistics from the NFPA and USFA:

- ▶ Half of home fire deaths result from fires reported between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. when most people are asleep.
- ▶ One quarter of home fire deaths were caused by fires that started in the bedroom. Another quarter resulted from fires in the living room, family room or den.
- ▶ Three out of five home fire deaths happen from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.
- ▶ Smoking materials are the leading cause of home fire deaths. Of these:
 - most deaths were caused by fires that started in bedrooms (40%) or living rooms, family rooms or dens (35%).
 - Sleep was a factor in roughly one-third of deaths;
 - possible alcohol impairment was a factor in one in five (19%) of deaths.
 - Also, one out of four fatal victims is not the smoker whose cigarettes started the fire.
- ▶ Cooking equipment is the leading cause of home fire injuries, followed by heating equipment.

Home heating:

-4-

- ▶ In most years, heating equipment is the second leading cause of home fires, fire deaths, and fire injuries, following cooking.
- ▶ The leading factor contributing to heating equipment fires was failure to clean. This usually involved creosote build-up in chimneys.
- ▶ Confined fires, those fires confined to chimneys, flues or fuel burners, accounted for 87 percent of home heating fires.
- ▶ Thirty percent of the nonconfined home heating fires occurred because the heat source was too close to things that can burn.
- ▶ Just over half of home heating fire deaths resulted from fires caused by heating equipment too close to things that can burn, such as upholstered furniture, clothing, mattresses or bedding.
- ▶ Portable or fixed space heaters, including wood stoves, are involved in one-third (33%) of home heating fires and four out of five (81%) home heating deaths.

Some essential home heating tips to help stay fire-safe this winter:

- ▶ Maintain heating equipment and chimneys annually by having them cleaned, inspected, and repaired as needed by a qualified professional.
- ▶ Keep anything that can burn, such as paper, clothing, rugs, curtains, bedding, and furniture, at least 3 feet from all heat sources including fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators, space heaters or candles.
- ▶ Nationally, over 200 people die each year from carbon monoxide produced by fuel burning appliances in the home including furnaces, ranges, water heaters and room heaters. If using a fossil fuel for heating, install and maintain carbon monoxide (CO) alarms to avoid the risk of CO poisoning.
- ▶ Make sure your home has working smoke alarms. Having a working smoke alarm reduces one's chances of dying in a fire by nearly half.
- ▶ Never use flammable liquids or excessive amounts of paper to start or accelerate a fire.
- ▶ If you heat with wood, "burn clean, not green": properly seasoned wood is safer, produces less creosote, and provides more heat.
- ▶ For ashes, use only a metal container with a lid located 3 feet away from all combustible material for at least 24 hours before further disposal – preferably outside, at least 3 feet from your home.

- ▶ If a room has a pitched (slanted) ceiling, install the alarm within 3 feet of the peak but not within the apex of the peak (4 inches down from the peak). More specifically, for a pitched ceiling, mount the unit near the ceiling's highest point, 4 to 12 inches away from the wall. For an A-frame ceiling, mount the unit at least 4 to 12 inches away from the peak.

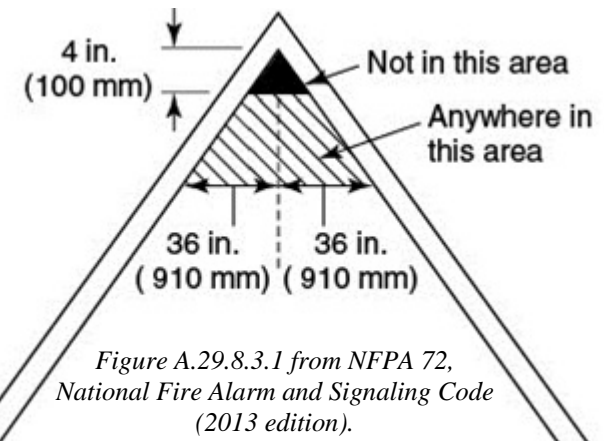


Figure A.29.8.3.1 from NFPA 72, National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code (2013 edition).

- ▶ Install basement smoke alarms close to the bottom of the stairs. Don't install an alarm at the top of basement stairs; dead air trapped near the closed door could prevent smoke from reaching the unit.
- ▶ Don't install smoke alarms near windows, doors, or ducts where drafts might interfere with their operation. Some household environments can cause nuisance alarms or interfere with a smoke alarm's operation. Avoid placing alarms near a cooking appliance, a dusty area, a shower, or any area where the temperature drops below 40°F (4.5°C) or rises above 110°F (43°C).
- ▶ Cooking fumes, steam, and automobile exhaust can result in nuisance alarms. Do not install alarms in bathrooms, kitchens, garages, attics, or unheated areas or near recessed ceiling areas, ceiling fans, furnaces, or furnace vents. Place alarms at least 3 feet (0.9 meter) horizontally from bathroom doors.
- ▶ Never paint smoke alarms. Paint, stickers, or other decorations could keep the alarms from working.
- ▶ **For the best protection, interconnect all smoke alarms.** When one smoke alarm sounds they all sound. Interconnection can be done using hard-wiring or wireless technology. When interconnected smoke alarms are installed, it is important that all of the alarms are from the same manufacturer. If the alarms are not compatible, they may not sound.

Hush buttons: Nuisance alarms resulting from a smoky oven, burned toast, or other non-threatening circumstance are a common complaint. If cooking fumes or steam sets off nuisance alarms, replace the alarm with an alarm that has a “hush” button. A hush button will reduce the alarm’s sensitivity for a short period of time.

An ionization alarm with a hush button or a photoelectric alarm should be used if the alarm is within 20 feet of a cooking appliance. Pressing the hush button deactivates the alarm for roughly 7 minutes, after which it reactivates automatically. If a real fire occurs, the unit will override the pause feature and sound the alarm.

Missing or disconnected batteries are the leading cause of smoke alarm failure. The hush feature discourages the dangerous (and too common) practice of disconnecting or removing alarm batteries in response to nuisance alarms and is recommended for use in all locations.

Installing smoke alarms:

“Hear the Beep where you Sleep! Every Bedroom needs a working smoke alarm.”

(from NFPA’s Fire Prevention Week, Oct. 4-10, 2015; see <http://www.firepreventionweek.org>)



- ▶ Choose smoke alarms that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory. Smoke alarms should be installed according to NFPA 72 and the manufacturer’s instructions. Keep manufacturer’s instructions for reference.
- ▶ Install smoke alarms inside each bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home, including the basement.
- ▶ On levels without bedrooms, install alarms in the living room (or family room or den) or near the stairway to the upper level, or in both locations.
- ▶ Smoke alarms installed in the basement should be installed on the ceiling at the bottom of the stairs leading to the next level.
- ▶ Smoke alarms should be installed at least 10 feet (3 meters) from a cooking appliance to minimize false alarms when cooking.
- ▶ Heat and smoke rise, so smoke alarms should be installed on the ceiling or high on a wall to detect the first traces of smoke.
- ▶ Wall-mounted smoke alarms should be installed so that the top of the alarm is not more than 12 inches (30.5 centimeters) from the ceiling.

- ▶ Keep children and pets away from heat sources.
- ▶ Never leave a fire or a portable heater in use unattended.

Space Heaters: Space heaters produce temperatures that can ignite ordinary home furnishings. If you must use a portable space heater, only use a heater from a recognized testing laboratory. Place it on a level, hard and nonflammable surface (such as ceramic tile floor), not on rugs or carpets; plug portable heaters directly into outlets and never into an extension cord or power strip. Keep anything that can burn, such as bedding, clothing and drapes, at least 3 feet away from the heater. Make sure the heater has an automatic shut-off, so if it tips over, it shuts off. Make sure the room has enough ventilation to help prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Turn heaters off when you go to bed or leave the room.

Fireplaces: Make sure the damper is open before lighting; keep a glass or metal screen in front of the fireplace large enough to catch embers, sparks and rolling logs; do not burn paper or trash in your fireplace; and put the fire out before you go to sleep or leave your home.

Wood Stoves: Make sure your wood stove is 3 feet from anything that can burn; do not burn paper or trash in your wood stove; do not leave your stove unattended while the drafts are still open.

Furnaces: Have your furnace inspected each year; check furnace control and emergency shut-offs to be sure they are working properly; and keep anything that can burn away from the furnace.

Kerosene Heaters: Only use kerosene heaters from a recognized testing laboratory; make sure the heater has an automatic shut-off, so if it tips over, it shuts off; and refuel your cooled heater outside. Note: The use of kerosene heaters inside the home is prohibited in California (Sec. 19881, Health and Safety Code).

- ▶ More about safe home heating, including how to identify creosote buildup and what you can do if a flue fire occurs, is on our website.



Ten percent of **fireworks fires** occur during the period from December 30 through January 3, with the peak on New Year’s Day.



Winter Holiday Fire Safety:

- ▶ Electrical distribution or lighting equipment was involved in 38% of home Christmas tree fires.
- ▶ A heat source too close to the tree causes roughly 1 in every 4 of the fires.
- ▶ Although Christmas tree fires are not common, when they do occur, they are more likely to be serious. On average, one of every 31 reported home fires that began with a Christmas tree resulted in a death, compared to an average of one death per 144 total reported home fires.
- ▶ Nearly half of holiday decoration fires happen because decorations are placed too close to a heat source.

Some holiday safety tips:

- ✚ If you have an indoor **Christmas tree**, keep your tree at least 3 feet away from heat sources, does not block any exits, cut 2 inches from the base of the trunk to keep it fresher longer, and be sure to add water to the tree stand daily. Once the tree becomes dry, get rid of it. Dried-out trees are a serious fire danger.
- ✚ Inspect **holiday lights** each year for frayed wires, bare spots and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up. Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Connect no more than three mini light sets for decorating. Always turn off holiday lights before leaving home or going to bed.
- ✚ December is the peak time of year for home **candle fires**.
 - The top three days for home candle fires are Christmas, New Year's Day, and Christmas Eve.
 - Nearly three in five candle fires start when things that can burn are too close to the candle.
 - Candles started 38% of home decoration structure fires. Half (51%) of the December home decoration fires were started by candles, compared to one-third (35%) in January to November.
 - Roughly one-third of home candle fires started in the bedroom.

If you do use lit candles, place them in stable holders, where they cannot be knocked down easily, away from decorations and other things that can burn. Consider using battery-operated flameless candles, which can look, smell and feel like real candles. ***Never leave a burning candle unattended.***

Smoke Alarms:

A fire can double in size every 30 seconds. In the event of a home fire, working smoke alarms provide a crucial time advantage and can help to save your home, your life, and the lives of your family members.

- ▶ **On average, you have less than 3 minutes to escape a house fire.**
- ▶ Most fire deaths are caused by smoke – not flames.
- ▶ Most fire deaths and injuries occur between midnight and 8 a.m. when people are asleep.

Smoke alarms save lives: It is a proven fact that you are 4 times more likely to survive a home fire if you have a working smoke alarm than if you don't.

- ▶ Three out of five home fire deaths in 2007-2011 were caused by fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.
- ▶ Working smoke alarms cut the risk of dying in reported home fires in half.
- ▶ In fires considered large enough to activate the smoke alarm, hardwired alarms operated 93% of the time, while battery powered alarms operated only 79% of the time.
- ▶ When smoke alarms fail to operate, it is usually because batteries are missing, disconnected, or dead.

There are two types of smoke alarms – ionization and photoelectric. An ionization smoke alarm is generally more responsive to flaming fires, and a photoelectric smoke alarm is generally more responsive to smoldering fires. *For the best protection, both types of alarms or combination ionization-photoelectric alarms, also known as dual sensor smoke alarms, are recommended.*

Visual and tactile smoke alarms are also available for those who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Oregon law requires landlords to provide working smoke alarms in all rental dwellings. **If you rent** and do not have working smoke alarms, contact your landlord, property manager or the owner.

Having smoke alarm protection may also help you to qualify for a lower insurance premium; check with your insurer.

- ▶ Turn off/unplug all electrical appliances before leaving your residence for any length of time, including the clothes dryer, which can overheat; clean lint filters/traps & vents.
- ▶ Overloaded circuits are a constant problem that cause home fires. Multi-plugs should be avoided. Don't overload extension cords or wall outlets. Only plug one heat-producing or high-wattage appliance (such as a coffeemaker, toaster, space heater, etc.) into a receptacle outlet at a time.
- ▶ Do not overload power strips. Use power strips that have internal overload protection.
- ▶ Use circuit-protected, multi-prong adapters for additional outlets.
- ▶ If receptacles or switches feel warm, shut off the circuit and have them checked by an electrician. Make sure you are using only proper size fuses.
- ▶ If you have frequent or recurring problems with blowing fuses or tripping circuit breakers, flickering or dimming lights, sparks from an outlet, discolored or warm wall outlets, a tingling feeling when you touch an electrical appliance, or a burning smell or rubbery odor coming from an appliance, call a qualified electrician.

Electrical arcing: When an electrical switch is opened or closed, an arc, or discharge of electricity, occurs. If connections are loose or where wires or cords have been damaged, an unintentional arc can occur leading to high temperatures and sparking, possibly igniting anything that can burn.

- ▶ Arcing accounts for most home electrical fires.

Arc-fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) are a new kind of circuit breaker that shut off electricity to protect electrical outlets when a dangerous condition occurs. Installing AFCIs in the home can offer protection against electrical fires caused by arcing.

Ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) reduce the risk of shock. GFCIs shut off an electrical circuit when it becomes a shock hazard.

- ▶ Consider having Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCIs) installed in your home. Use a qualified electrician.
- ▶ Make sure your home has ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) in the kitchen bathroom(s), laundry, basement, and outdoor areas.
- ▶ Test AFCIs and GFCIs once a month to make sure they are working properly.

Cooking Fires – Some statistics:

- ▶ Cooking fires are the number one cause of home fires and home injuries; two of every five home fires started in the kitchen.
- ▶ The leading cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking (one-third of reported home cooking fires).
- ▶ Two-thirds of home cooking fires started with ignition of food or other cooking materials.
- ▶ Most cooking fires involve the stovetop; ranges accounted for almost three of every five (57%) of home cooking fire incidents. Ovens accounted for 16%.
- ▶ Children under five face a higher risk of non-fire burns associated with cooking and hot food and drinks than of being hurt in a cooking fire.
- ▶ Microwave ovens are one of the leading home products associated with scald burns (two out of five microwave injuries).
- ▶ Clothing was the item first ignited in less than 1% of home cooking fires, but these incidents accounted for 15% of the cooking fire deaths.
- ▶ Fifty-five percent of people injured in home fires involving cooking equipment were hurt while attempting to fight the fire themselves.
- ▶ Failure to clean was a factor contributing to ignition in 17% of reported home fires involving ovens or rotisseries.
- ▶ Cooking equipment was involved in 18% of home decoration fires. This can happen when a decoration is left on or too close to a stove or other cooking equipment.
- ▶ Thanksgiving is the peak day for home cooking fires, followed by Christmas Day and Christmas Eve.

Cooking Safety Tips from the NFPA:

- ▶ Be on alert! If you are sleepy or have consumed alcohol don't use the stove or stovetop.
- ▶ Keep anything that can catch fire — oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels or curtains — away from your stovetop.
- ▶ Never wear loose fitting clothes or big sleeves when cooking and keep all metals out of microwave ovens.
- ▶ Have a “kid-free zone” of at least 3 feet around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

- ▶ Keep lids of pots handy and pot and pan handles turned inwards.
- ▶ Never leave cooking unattended – stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, boiling, or broiling food. If you are simmering, baking, or roasting food, check it regularly, stay in the kitchen while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
- ▶ Keep a portable multi-purpose Type A-B-C fire extinguisher handy (for use with materials like cloth, wood, and paper, combustible or flammable liquids, and electrical equipment) and a Type K (for use with vegetable oils, animal oils, and fats in cooking appliances). Know how to properly use them. If you don't know, don't attempt to use them.
- ▶ Use cool water for scalds and burns: Cool water helps to stop the burning of skin when it occurs. If you or someone gets burned, don't use butter or some other home remedy. Place the burned area in cool water for 10-15 minutes and seek professional medical help if needed.

If you have a small (grease) cooking fire and decide to fight the fire:

- ▶ On the stovetop: smother the flames by sliding a lid over the pan and turning off the burner. Leave the pan covered until it completely cools.
- ▶ For an oven fire: turn off the heat and keep the door closed.

If you have any doubt about fighting a small fire, just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire. Call 9-1-1 from outside the home.

Smoking Safety:

Careless smoking is the number one cause of fire deaths in America. Never smoke in bed or when drowsy. Give smokers large ashtrays. Wet cigarette butts before discarding them into garbage receptacles. If you're throwing a party, have a designated area for smoking so you can keep an eye on smokers and avoid accidents.

Also be sure that family members who smoke only buy fire-safe cigarettes and smoke outside, matches and lighters are secured out of children's sight, ashtrays are large, deep and kept away from items that can catch fire, and that ashtrays are emptied into a container that will not burn.

Lighters/Matches: Small children are often fascinated by matches and lighters and can mistake them for toys. Keep them out of reach or locked up from little ones. Adults should teach children that matches and lighters are tools for adults, not toys to be played with. If children find them they should tell an adult immediately.

Electrical & Appliance Safety

- ▶ *December and January are the peak months for home electrical fires.*
- ▶ Almost half (48%) of home structure electrical fires involve some type of electrical distribution equipment (such as wiring, outlets, switches, lamps, light bulbs, cords, or plugs). The electrical distribution equipment provides the heat leading to ignition; for example, a hot light bulb that is too close to something that can catch fire. Other leading types of equipment are washers or dryers, fans, portable or stationary space heaters, air conditioning equipment, water heaters and ranges.
- ▶ Nearly one third (30%) of home electrical fires began with ignition of wire or cable insulation.
- ▶ The leading areas of origin for electrical fires are the bedroom (14%), attic (12%), and kitchen (11%).

Electrical & Appliance Safety Tips:

- ▶ Place lamps on level surfaces, away from things that can burn. Use light bulbs that match the recommended wattage on the lamp or fixture.
- ▶ Do not place cloth over a light bulb to diffuse or soften the light. Buying a low wattage or soft white or pastel light bulb can help you achieve this effect without creating a fire hazard.
- ▶ Check your electrical cords. If they are cracked, frayed, loose or damaged, replace them. Don't try to repair them. Electrical work should only be done by a qualified electrician.
- ▶ Pinching cords against walls or furniture or running them under carpets or across doorways can cause a fire.
- ▶ Use extension cords for temporary wiring only. Consider having additional circuits or receptacles added by a qualified electrician so you do not have to use extension cords.
- ▶ Always plug major appliances, like refrigerators, stoves, washers and dryers, directly into a wall outlet. Never use an extension cord with a major appliance — it can easily overheat and start a fire.
- ▶ Always plug small appliances directly into a wall outlet.
- ▶ Unplug small appliances when you are not using them.
- ▶ If an appliance is malfunctioning, unplug it if it is safe to do so. If necessary, cut off power by unscrewing a fuse or turning off the circuit breaker.