

Fire Safety

Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are not designed for use on large or spreading fires. Even on small fires, they are effective only under the following conditions:

- The extinguisher must be rated for the type of fire being extinguished.
- The extinguisher must be large enough for the fire at hand.
- The extinguisher must be in good working order, fully charged and within easy reach.
- The operator must be trained in the proper use of the extinguisher.
- The operator must be physically capable of lifting, handling and operating the extinguisher.

What type of extinguisher should I buy?

There are three basic classes of fire extinguishers. Fire extinguishers must be labelled to show the class of fire they can extinguish.

- **Class A:**

Ordinary combustibles such as paper, wood, rubbish, drapes and upholstery.

- **Class B:**

Flammable liquids such as gasoline, oils, solvents, paints and flammable gases.

- **Class C:**

?Electrical fires involving Class "A" or Class "B" materials and live electrical power - overheated wiring, fuse boxes, stoves, motors etc.

The extinguisher must be tested and listed by The Underwriters' Laboratories of Canada (ULC). Look for the ULC label on the extinguisher.

Warning!

Be certain that you use the correct type of extinguisher for the fire you are fighting. If you use the wrong type of extinguisher, you can endanger yourself and even make the fire worse.

Numbers are also used with letters for extinguishers labelled for class A and B fires. The larger the number, the larger the fire the extinguisher can put out. Extinguishers rated ABC Multipurpose provide the required protection for all of the above types of fire.

Take care of your extinguishers

Extinguishers require regular care. Learn how to inspect your extinguisher by reading your operator's manual. Follow the manufacturer's maintenance instructions. Remember to recharge reusable extinguishers and replace disposable models after every use.

Where should I install my extinguishers?

Install your extinguishers in plain view, above the reach of children, near an exit route, and away from stoves and heating appliances. Ideal locations for your extinguishers are in the kitchen, workshop, upstairs and at the top of a basement stairwell.

When should I use my extinguisher to fight a fire?

Only fight a fire if:

- the fire is small and not spreading
- occupants have been alerted
- everyone has left or is leaving the building
- 9-1-1 has been called
- you have a clear escape route that won't be blocked by fire
- you know how to operate your extinguisher and are aware of its capabilities

Don't fight a fire in any other circumstance. Leave the premises immediately, close off the area and call 9-1-1 from a neighbour's home.

Remember "P-A-S-S" when fighting a fire

(Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep)

- **PULL** out the locking pin, breaking the seal. Some extinguishers may use a different release device. Please refer to your operator's manual.
- **AIM** the nozzle horn (or hose) at the base of the fire about 3 metres (10 feet) from the fire.
- **SQUEEZE** the trigger handle all the way, releasing the extinguishing agent.
- **SWEEP** the material discharged by the extinguisher from side to side, moving front to back, across the base of the fire until it appears to be out. Keep your eyes on fire area. Repeat the process if the fire starts up again. Never turn your back on a fire even if you think it is out.

Most extinguishers will operate according to the **PASS** method. Some extinguishers may not. Read your operator's manual for specific directions. Remember to recharge the extinguisher immediately after use.

What is fire?

Fire is a combination of three elements: heat, fuel and oxygen. Remove any one of these three elements and the fire will go out.

For example, an ABC multipurpose dry chemical extinguishing agent forms a coating layer over whatever is burning and thereby separates the oxygen from the fuel. The chemical also reduces the heat and interferes with the chemical reaction-combustion process.

Hot Fire Safety Tips

To reduce fire danger in your home:

Install and maintain smoke alarms

- Smoke alarms warn you of a fire in time to let you escape.
- Install smoke alarms on each level of your home, especially near each sleeping area.
- Test smoke alarms regularly and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Replace weak or dead batteries immediately with new ones.
- Remember, if your smoke alarms are hardwired they will not function during a power failure - consider installing a backup battery powered smoke alarm as an additional asset to your home.

Plan and practice your escape

- Prepare and practice a fire escape plan with every member of your household.
- Look for two ways out of each room.
- Arrange an outside meeting place and a safe location to call **9-1-1**.
- If you live in a multi-storey building, in the event of fire, don't use elevators.

Space heaters need space

- Keep portable and space heaters at least 1 metre (3 feet) from anything that can burn.
- Never leave heaters on when you leave the house or go to bed.
- Keep children well away from heaters.

Smoking is hazardous

- Set up a designated smoking area outside with large, deep ashtrays, and soak the butts with water before dumping them in the trash.
- Ask smokers to take it outside to reduce the risk of indoor fires and protect people from being exposed to harmful second-hand smoke.
- Smokers need watchers. Before going to sleep, check under and around sofa cushions and upholstered furniture for smouldering cigarettes.

Be careful when cooking

- Be alert when you cook, and keep children out of the way.
- Don't wear loose fitting clothing and be careful not to reach over hot burners.
- Never leave cooking unattended.
- If a pot catches fire, cover it with a lid to smother the flames and turn off the burner.
- Keep pot handles turned inward.

Matches and lighters are for adults

- Keep matches and lighters out of reach of children.
- Teach children that matches and lighters are only for adults.

Use electricity safely

- If an appliance smokes or smells like it is burning, unplug it immediately and have it repaired.
- Check all of your electrical cords and replace any that are cracked or frayed.
- Don't overload electrical outlets or run extension cords under rugs or carpets.
- Don't tamper with the fuse boxes or use fuses of improper size.

Cool a burn

- If someone gets burned, immediately run cool water over the wound for 5 to 10 minutes to ease the pain.
- If the burn is blistered or charred, see a doctor immediately.

Stop, drop and roll

- If your clothes catch fire, don't run.
- Stop where you are,
- Drop gently to the ground,
- Cover your face with your hands to protect your face and lungs,
- Roll over and over until the flames are smothered.

Crawl low under smoke

- If you get caught in smoke, the cleanest air will be near the floor.
- Get down on your hands and knees and crawl to the nearest safe exit.

Power failures

- When power fails don't use open flames or a charcoal grill indoors.
- Don't use gas-fuelled appliances as alternative heating sources indoors.

- If you plan to use a portable generator, don't connect household items to the generator unless you have it wired professionally - don't hook the generator up to your home's electrical system.
- Be sure the generator is kept outside where exhaust doesn't enter buildings.
- Test your smoke alarms now - remember, if they're hardwired they won't function during a power failure - install backup battery-powered smoke alarms for additional protection.

In case of fire or an emergency, call 9-1-1

Smoke Alarms

NOTE: The Fire Protection and Prevention Act allows for fines for contravening the Ontario Fire Code by not having working smoke alarms. In the case of an offence for contravention of the Fire Code, a fine of not more than \$25,000 or imprisonment for a term of not more than one year or both can be imposed.

85 % of all fire deaths and injuries occur in homes where there are no working smoke alarms. Remember, only a working smoke alarm can save your life! Most fatal fires occur at night when people are asleep. Often, victims never wake up. A working smoke alarm will alert you, giving you precious time to escape.

The Fire Department has the authority to go door to door to do smoke alarm checks. If there is no alarm in the house, we may install one. If an existing alarm's battery is dead, we may replace the battery.

What is the best alarm to buy?

Smoke alarms have many different features. They can be electrically connected, battery powered, or both. The pause feature to reduce nuisance alarms is recommended.

Where to install Smoke Alarms.

Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, and near sleeping areas. Because smoke rises, they should be placed on or near the ceiling, according to your users manual. Try to avoid areas such as bathrooms, heating appliances, windows or close to ceiling fans.

Why does my smoke alarm beep?

An intermittent beeping means that the battery needs replacing immediately. Don't wait this long. Replace the battery in all of your smoke alarms at least once a year. Use special dates like birthdays or Christmas or when you change your clock.

Smoke alarm care.

Follow manufacturers directions. Test your alarm weekly by pressing the test button. Once a month test your alarms using smoke from a smoldering string. Dust can clog a smoke alarm, so every six months, carefully vacuum inside the power unit according to manufacturer's instructions.

Smoke Alarms do not last forever.

Replace smoke alarms that are over ten years old. Replace smoke alarms that fail the above tests or that malfunction in any way.

Smoke Alarm Questions and Answers:

What is a smoke alarm?

A smoke alarm is a battery operated or electrically connected device that senses the presence of visible or invisible particles produced by combustion and that is designed to sound an alarm within the room or suite within which it is located.

Are smoke alarms effective?

The largest percentage of fire deaths in the home occurs at night while people are asleep. Therefore, a working smoke alarm can provide an early warning that can make the difference between life and death. According to studies published by the National Fire Protection Association, having a smoke alarm cuts your risk of dying in a fire by nearly half. However, a smoke alarm should be part of an overall home fire safety strategy that also includes preventing fires by adopting fire safe behaviour, and developing and practicing a home fire escape plan. In a fire, escape time may be very limited. Therefore, escape plans are a critical aspect of a home fire safety strategy.

What is the principal reason for smoke alarms not functioning?

Over a recent three year period, an analysis was undertaken of people that died in homes where smoke alarms were present but did not work. 85% of those victims did not have a functioning smoke alarm because of a dead or missing battery/power source.

What types of smoke alarms are available on the market?

There are two types of household smoke alarms in common use. These are known as ionization or photoelectric type smoke alarms.

How does an ionization type smoke alarm work?

This type of alarm uses a small amount of radioactive material to ionize air in the sensing chamber. As a result, the air chamber becomes conductive permitting current to flow between two charged electrodes. When smoke particles enter the chamber, the conductivity of the chamber air decreases. When this reduction in conductivity is

reduced to a predetermined level, the alarm is set off. Most smoke alarms in use are of this type.

How does a photoelectric type smoke alarm work?

A photoelectric type smoke alarm consists of a light emitting diode and a light sensitive sensor in the sensing chamber. The presence of suspended smoke particles in the chamber scatters the light beam. This scattered light is detected and sets off the alarm.

Which type of alarm is more effective?

There is no simple answer to this question. The two types operate on different principles and therefore may respond differently to various conditions. Some advantages to each type are set out below:

Ionization

- Fastest type to respond to flaming fires
- Lowest cost and most commonly sold
- Some models have a hush or temporary silence feature that allows silencing without removing the battery
- Some models are available with a long life battery

Photoelectric

- Fastest type to respond to slow smoldering fires and white or gray smoke
- Less prone to nuisance alarms from cooking

Notwithstanding these differences, to achieve ULC listing, both alarms must be tested to the same standard and meet the same requirements. Photoelectric smoke alarms may respond slightly faster to smoldering fires, while ionization alarms respond slightly faster to flaming fires. Since you can't predict the type of fire that will occur, it is difficult to recommend which is best. Both alarms will detect all types of fires that commonly occur in the home. Installing both types of smoke alarms in your home can enhance fire safety.

Which type of smoke alarm should a homeowner purchase?

It is the consumer's responsibility to assess the circumstances of their household and to select the most appropriate alarm. However, an important consideration in the purchase of a smoke alarm is conformance to a recognized standard. In Ontario, CAN/ULC-S531 is the recognized standard for both the ionization and photoelectric types of alarms. Both ionization and photoelectric type products conforming to this standard are available on the market. A homeowner will know that a smoke alarm meets the requirements of this standard by the ULC or cUL label on the device.

What maintenance is required for smoke alarms?

The Ontario Fire Code requires that smoke alarms be maintained in operating condition at all times. Smoke alarms should be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Occasional light vacuuming will keep the air vents clean. On battery powered units, check to see that the battery is in place, connected, not corroded and functioning. Although the test frequency is not prescribed in the Ontario Fire Code, smoke alarms should be tested on a regular basis. Some manufacturers and authorities recommend that smoke alarms be tested at least once a month. Additional information on smoke alarm maintenance, particularly in rental accommodation, is available in the OFM guideline "Maintenance of Smoke Alarms."

How many smoke alarms should I have in my home?

The Ontario Fire Code - Installation requirements:

2.13.1 (1) A smoke alarm shall be installed

- (a) if a sleeping area in a dwelling unit is serviced by a hallway, in the hallway
- (b) if a sleeping area in a dwelling unit is not serviced by a hallway, between the sleeping area and the remainder of the dwelling unit
- (c) if a sleeping room is not within a dwelling unit, in the sleeping room, and
- (d) on each storey without a sleeping area in a dwelling unit.

(2) a smoke alarm shall:

- (a) be permanently connected to an electrical circuit with no disconnect switch between the overcurrent device and the smoke alarm, or
- (b) be battery operated

(3) A smoke alarm shall meet the requirements of CAN/ULC C-S531, "Standard for Smoke Alarms"

How should they be installed?

Smoke alarms should be installed according to the manufacturer's instructions.

What are the features I can expect to find on a current smoke alarm model?

These are some features you can expect to find:

- a "missing battery" indicator,

- an optional alarm hush or silence feature,
- the use of a power "on" indicator light to show that ac power is being supplied to 120 volt wired in smoke alarms.

Studies suggest that a significant percentage of smoke alarms in use do not work because of dead or missing batteries. What is being done about this problem?

The OFM and the Ontario fire service have been stressing the importance of smoke alarm maintenance through various public education initiatives. This effort is now backed by requirements in the Ontario Fire Code which mandate smoke alarm maintenance. The Standard for Smoke Alarms has also been amended and now requires smoke alarms to have a visual indicator to flag a missing battery, for example, the inability to close the smoke alarm cover when a battery is removed. Nuisance alarms are a frequent reason for removing batteries. As a result, the use of smoke alarms with a hush or silence feature is being promoted in public safety programs. In addition, smoke alarms with long life batteries are now available on the market.

What are long life smoke alarms?

Long life smoke alarms have been designed to use lithium batteries where the battery life is predicted to last 10 years with the normal low battery drain of ionization type smoke alarms. The smoke alarms are still designed to provide a low battery audible signal as the battery charge is reduced to a level that may make the smoke alarm inoperable. It should be noted that although these batteries are designed to last 10 years, ongoing testing and maintenance is required as per manufacturers' instructions.

Can long life lithium batteries be used in any smoke alarm?

No. Only battery types recommended by the manufacturer should be used in a smoke alarm. Incorrect batteries may not provide the operating characteristics expected of the smoke alarm.

How often should a smoke alarm be replaced?

As a rule of thumb, the Office of the Fire Marshal recommends replacing smoke alarms every 10 years or when it has exceeded the manufacturer's recommended life cycle. Additional information for recommended smoke alarm replacement is available in the OFM guideline "Maintenance of Smoke Alarms."

How can I be sure that my smoke alarms will work?

We have every reason to believe that alarms listed by a certification agency accredited by the Standards Council of Canada will function as intended. To ensure that an alarm has been manufactured and tested to an acceptable standard, there should be a marking by the Underwriters Laboratories of Canada (ULC), or Underwriters Laboratories Incorporated (cUL).

Please be advised that the Chief Fire Official has the authority to enforce the Fire Code within his or her jurisdiction and should be contacted prior to implementing any opinion expressed in the following information.

Visit the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management website for a list of questions/answers pertaining to the legislation.

Ontario is taking another step to keep families and homes in Ontario safe by making carbon monoxide alarms mandatory in all residential homes.

The new regulation, which came into effect October 15, 2014, updates Ontario's Fire Code following the passage of Bill 77 last year. These updates are based on recommendations from a Technical Advisory Committee which was led by the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management and included experts from fire services, the hotel and rental housing industries, condo owners and alarm manufacturers.

Carbon monoxide alarm are now be required near all sleeping areas in residential homes and in the service rooms, and adjacent sleeping areas in multi-residential units. Carbon monoxide alarms can be hardwired, battery-operated or plugged into the wall.

Broadly speaking, this law has the following effect:

- Testing and maintenance requirements that apply to smoke alarm now apply to CO alarms
- Under the Fire Code amendments, CO alarms will be required in existing residential occupancies, where:
 - Single dwelling homes (e.g., privately owned homes) have an attached storage garage and/or a fuel burning appliance.
 - CO alarms will be required only near sleeping areas of these occupancies and not throughout the entire home.
 - Multi-unit buildings (e.g., apartment buildings or condominium buildings, hotels, etc.) have an attached storage garage and/or a fuel burning appliance/service room. Within these buildings, CO alarms will only be required:
 - Near sleeping areas of suites that contain a fuel burning appliance within the suite.
 - Near sleeping areas of suites that are adjacent to a storage garage and/or service room with a fuel burning appliance.

Quick Facts

- More than 50 people die each year from carbon monoxide poisoning in Canada, including 11 on average in Ontario.
- Bill 77, an Act to Proclaim Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week and to amend the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, received royal assent in December 2013.

- The first Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week will take place November 1-8, 2014.
- The Ontario Building Code requires the installation of carbon monoxide alarms in homes and other residential buildings built after 2001.

Why Should I Care About Carbon Monoxide?

It Kills.

Many Canadians die every year from carbon monoxide poisoning in their own homes, most of them while sleeping.

It Injures.

Hundreds of Canadians are hospitalized every year from carbon monoxide poisoning, many of whom are permanently disabled. Everyone is at Risk - 88% of all homes have something that poses a carbon monoxide threat.

Carbon Monoxide is a colourless, odourless, tasteless, toxic gas that enters the body through the lungs during the normal breathing process. It replaces oxygen in the blood and prevents the flow of oxygen to the heart, brain and other vital organs.

Where does Carbon Monoxide Come From?

Produced when carbon-based fuels are incompletely burned such as:

- Wood
- Propane
- Natural Gas
- Heating Oil
- Coal
- Kerosene
- Charcoal
- Gasoline

What Are the Main Sources of Carbon Monoxide in my Home?

Wood burning/gas stoves, gas refrigerators, gasoline engines, kerosene heaters and others.

How Can I Tell if There is a Carbon Monoxide Leak in my Home?

- Headache, nausea, burning eyes, fainting, confusion, drowsiness.
- Often mistaken for common ailments like the flu
- Symptoms improve when away from the home for a period of time
- Symptoms experienced by more than one member of the household.

- Continued exposure to higher levels may result in unconscious, brain damage and death.
- The elderly, children and people with heart or respiratory conditions may be particularly sensitive to carbon monoxide.

Environment

- Air feels stale/stuffy
- Excessive moisture on windows or walls
- Sharp penetrating odour or smell of gas when furnace or other fuel burning appliance turns on.
- Burning and pilot light flames are yellow/orange, not blue
- Pilot light on the furnace or water heater goes out
- Chalky white powder or soot build up occurs around exhaust vent or chimney.

How Can I protect Myself and my Family?

- Regularly maintained appliances that are properly ventilated should not produce hazardous levels of carbon monoxide
- Have a qualified service professional inspect your fuel burning appliance(s) at least once per year.
- Have your chimney inspected and cleaned every year by a W.E.T.T. certified professional.
- Be sure your carbon monoxide alarm has been certified to the Canadian Standard Association (CSA) CAN/CGA 6.19 standard or the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) 2034 standard.
- Install a carbon monoxide alarm in or near the sleeping area(s) of the home.
- Install the carbon monoxide alarms(s) in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

What Should I Do if my Carbon Monoxide Alarm Starts Beeping?

ALWAYS REACT TO A CARBON MONOXIDE ALARM THAT HAS ALARMED! GET OUT OF YOUR HOME AND CONTACT YOUR LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR ASSISTANCE.

To Keep Safe Please Remember:

You have a responsibility to know about the dangers of carbon monoxide. Your knowledge and actions may save lives.

A carbon monoxide alarm is a good second line of defense. It is not a substitute for the proper care and maintenance of your fuel burning appliance(s). Take the time to learn about the use of carbon monoxide alarms in your home to ensure you are using the equipment properly and effectively.

Where To Install A Carbon Monoxide Alarm

Since carbon monoxide moves freely in the air, the suggested location is in or as near as possible to sleeping areas of the home. The human body is most vulnerable to the effects of carbon monoxide during sleeping hours. To work properly the unit must not be blocked by furniture or draperies. Carbon Monoxide is virtually the same weight as air and therefore the alarm protects you in a high or low location.

For maximum protection, a carbon monoxide alarm should be located outside primary sleeping areas, in sleeping areas and in each level of your home.

Where NOT to Install a CO Alarm

Some locations may interfere with the proper operation of the alarm and may cause false alarms or trouble signals. CO alarms should not be installed in the following locations:

- Where the temperature may drop below 4.4o C (40oF) or exceed 37.8oC (100oF).
- Near paint thinner fumes or household cleaning products. Ensure proper ventilation when using these types of chemicals.
- Within 1.5m (5 feet) of any cooking or open flame appliances such as furnaces, stoves and fireplaces.
- In exhaust streams from gas engines, vents, flues or chimneys.
- Do not place in close proximity to an automobile exhaust pipe; this will damage the alarm.

Maintenance

Test your carbon monoxide alarm regularly to make sure it is operating properly. The owner's manual should tell you how to test your alarm. Remember to check the manual for information on when to buy a new carbon monoxide alarm.

If you have any questions regarding CO safety, please contact your local fire department

When a fire occurs, there is no time to waste. That is why it is so important to sit down with your family today and make a step-by-step plan for escaping from a fire.

Draw a floor plan of your home, marking two ways out of every room - especially sleeping areas. Discuss the escape routes with every member of your household. Agree on a meeting place outside your home where every member of the household will gather to wait for the fire department. This allows you to count heads and inform the fire department if anyone is trapped inside the burning building. Practice your escape plan at least twice a year. Have a fire drill in your home. Appoint someone to be a monitor and have everyone participate. A fire drill is not a race. Get out quickly, but carefully. Make your exit drill realistic. Pretend that some exits are blocked by fire and practice

alternative escape routes. Pretend that the lights are out and that some escape routes are filling with smoke.

[Print out an escape plan template](#)

Be Prepared

Make sure everyone in the household can unlock all doors and windows quickly, even in the dark. Windows or doors with security bars need to be equipped with quick-release devices and everyone in the household should know how to use them.

If you live in an apartment building, use stairways to escape. Never use an elevator during a fire. It may stop between floors or take you to a floor where the fire is burning.

If you live in a two storey house, and you must escape from a second storey window, be sure there is a safe way to reach the ground. Make special arrangements for children, older adults and people with disabilities. People who have difficulty moving should have a phone in their sleeping area and, if possible, should sleep on the ground floor.

Test doors before opening them. While kneeling or crouching at the door, reach up as high as you can and touch the door, the knob and the space between the door and its frame with the back of your hand. If the door is hot, use another escape route. If the door is cool, open it with caution.

If you are trapped, close all doors between you and the fire. Stuff the cracks around the doors with towels or blankets to keep out smoke. Wait at a window and signal for help with a light coloured cloth or a flashlight. If there is a phone in the room, call 911 and tell the operator exactly where you are.

Get Out Fast ...

In case of fire, do not stop for anything. Do not try to rescue possessions or pets. Go directly to your meeting place and then call the fire department from a neighbour's phone. Every member of your household should know how to call the fire department. Crawl low under smoke. Smoke contains deadly gases and heat rises. During a fire, cleaner air will be near the floor. If you encounter smoke when using your primary exit, use your alternate escape plan. If you must exit through smoke, crawl on your hands and knees keeping your head 12 to 24 inches (30 to 60 cm) above the floor.

... And Stay Out

Once you are out of your home, do not go back for any reason. If people are trapped, firefighters have the best chance of rescuing them. The heat and smoke of a fire are

overpowering. Firefighters have the training, experience and protective equipment needed to enter burning buildings.

Play It Safe....

More than half of all fatal home fires happen at night while people are asleep. Smoke alarms are set off when a fire starts, alerting people before they are trapped or overcome by smoke. With smoke alarms, your risk of dying in a home fire is cut nearly in half. Install smoke alarms outside every sleeping area and on every level of your home, including the basement. Test smoke alarms monthly. Change all smoke alarm batteries at least once a year. If your smoke alarm is more than 10 years old, replace it.

If you have any questions regarding fire safety, please contact your local fire department

Babysitters

Parent responsibilities

Entrusting your children to the care of a babysitter is a major responsibility. You should know your babysitter well. Try to employ the same babysitter on a regular basis. Only trust people who have a genuine sense of responsibility and a sincere concern for children. Your babysitter's first priority should be your children's safety.

Before the babysitter arrives

- Make sure your children and all family members are familiar with your home escape plan including escape routes and your designated outside meeting place.
- Post your home escape plan where everyone will see it.
- Test all smoke alarms to verify that they are working. Smoke alarms provide precious early warning that can make the difference to survive a fire.
- Speak to responsible neighbours so that, in an emergency, the babysitter may contact them.
- Post emergency numbers by the phone, 9-1-1 and your home address. Include your neighbour's name and telephone number and also the number where the babysitter can reach you.

When the babysitter arrives

- Tour your home with the babysitter, reviewing your home escape plan. Discuss the floor plan, pointing out marked exits.
- Show the babysitter the designated outside meeting place. Point out your neighbour's neighbours' homes.
- Clearly explain to the babysitter that if there is smoke or fire, your only concern is that everyone gets out of the home quickly and safely. If a smoke alarm sounds, no one should try to locate the fire and no one should try to put it out!

- Point out emergency telephone numbers to the babysitter and provide them with an emergency information sheet (see the example at end of this page). Note: Babysitters should keep this information sheet with them at all times when they are babysitting your children because they will need it if they have to quickly run to a neighbour's.
- Provide a flashlight for the babysitter in the event of a power failure and show them where you store an emergency kit.
- Provide the babysitter with additional relevant information about the children's routines and special needs such as allergies, medical conditions and medications.

Babysitter responsibilities in the event of fire

- Keep the safety of the children in mind. Get them to safety.
- No matter how small a fire is, if you see or smell smoke, or detect an odour of gas (smells like rotten eggs), immediately get the children outside and call **9-1-1**.
- Don't waste time dressing the children, even in cold weather.
- Wrap them in blankets instead.
- Don't turn on light switches as this may create a spark, ignite gas vapours and cause an explosion.
- Never re-enter a burning building. Smoke and toxic gases from a fire can be fatal.

Remember

- Keep matches and lighters away from children.
- Keep children away from space heaters.
- Keep children in sight at all times.
- Always keep this brochure in a conspicuous place.

Emergency information for babysitters

Police:

Fire:

Ambulance:

Family name:

Address:

Telephone:

Parents can be reached at:

Address:

Telephone:

Parents are due back at:

Neighbour's name:
Address:
Telephone:

Important information about the children:

In case of fire or an emergency, call 9-1-1

Children

In North America, hundreds of children die or are seriously injured in fires each year. Children are much more likely than adults to be injured in a fire. Teach your children the importance of fire safety at an early age.

Matches and lighters

Don't let your children play with fire. Children are fascinated by fire. They don't understand the danger of playing with matches and lighters. Always keep matches and lighters away from children. Store them up high, preferably in a locked cabinet. Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children.

Tell your children if they find matches or lighters:

- not to touch them, and
- to call an adult/grown-up right away.

Teach your children that:

- matches and lighters are not toys and are very dangerous;
- fire can hurt them and destroy things;
- once a fire starts it is difficult to control;
- matches and lighters should only be used by adults.

Plan to get out alive

When children see smoke or fire they often respond by trying to hide, for example, in a closet or under a bed. Tell your children that they cannot hide from fire but they must escape immediately by following a few simple rules:

- Prepare and practice a home fire escape plan with your children.
- Plan two ways to get out of every room.
- Practice fire drills at least twice a year with your children.
- In an apartment fire, your children need to know which stairways will get them out of the building.

- Tell your children never to take an elevator during a fire.
- Decide on a planned meeting area outside the home as part of your fire escape plan.
- Tell your children never to go back into a burning building!

Stop, drop and roll

Practice the Stop, Drop and Roll movements with your children. This could save their lives if their clothes ever catch on fire. Have your children pretend that their clothes are on fire. Then tell them to:

- **Stop** - Get them to stop where they are, and stop what they are doing. Don't run!
- **Drop** - Get them to drop to the floor as quickly as possible.
- **Roll** - Have them cover their face with their hands, then roll over and over until the flames are out.

Get out, stay out and stay alive!

- Teach your children the emergency Fire Department phone number, 9-1-1.
- Call the Fire Department from a neighbour's phone.

Crawl low under smoke

Teach your children:

- smoke is dangerous;
- smoke rises, so cleaner, cooler air is near the floor;
- to get down on their hands and knees and crawl low under the smoke to the nearest exit.

Make sure children know what a smoke alarm is. Children must know: Smoke alarms

- smoke alarms warn them if a fire starts;
- to get out of the house immediately when they hear the sound of the smoke alarm;
- show your child how important smoke alarms are by testing all your smoke alarms every month and changing their batteries at least once a year.

Fire Safety for Children

- [Learn Not to Burn®](#) is a comprehensive fire safety curriculum for use in schools. Developed by the National Fire Protection Association, NFPA has created this program to reach preschoolers through grade 2 students. It presents fire safety messages using classroom lessons, activities and home connections.

In case of fire or an emergency, call 9-1-1.

BBQ Safety

Backyard barbecuing is a huge part of our Canadian culture as we enjoy the summer season. Summertime is spent in the sunny weather at home, while camping and at the cottage, and grilling food is a pleasurable part of that summer experience.

Before you step out on your back patio or your cottage deck to begin, there are a few steps you must take to ensure that your propane or natural gas barbecue is in safe, good working order.

Follow these safety tips as you inspect your barbecue

- Dirt and debris can build up inside the grill over the winter months. Carefully clean out any particles, dust, and cobwebs that may have built up over the winter. Newer barbecues have spider guards to prevent them from entering the burner and burner tubes, however if yours does not, use a pipe cleaner or wire to ensure that spider webs have not built up inside. Remove lava rocks and grates for a thorough cleaning with soap and warm water.
- Clean your burner ports to ensure they are free of dirt and rust.
- Make sure that the barbecue hose is in good condition, and is free of cracks. Propane or Natural Gas leaking from a cracked hose may send out a stream that if ignited can produce huge flames.
- Check to ensure that all connections are tight and that there are no leaks. Do not use a match/lighter to check for leaks. You can brush a mixture of soap and water onto the connections and hoses (a 50/50 mix) and any rising bubbles will indicate a leak. Repair your barbecue so that there are no more bubbles.
- Rusty, damaged propane tanks should be replaced by 10 years of age or less.
- If you have uncertainty about the condition of any barbecue part you should replace it with a new component. Parts are available at most hardware stores and building supply centres.
- Call a certified fuel appliance repair person if you do not feel comfortable completing safety checks yourself.

How do I properly light my barbecue

- When your barbecue is safe and ready to be used, begin by opening the lid. Always have the lid in the open position when lighting the grill.
- Next turn on the gas by open the Natural Gas Valve or Propane Cylinder Valve. After this step has been completed, turn on the barbecue at the grill controls.
- Finally, light the barbecue by depressing the igniter button.

If your barbecue does not have an igniter button, insert a long match or barbecue lighter into the side burner hole. Have the match lit before you turn on the grill controls.

If the burner does not ignite, keep the lid open, turn off the gas and wait five minutes before trying once again.

How to shut off your barbecue

First shut off your Natural Gas or Propane Cylinder valve so that any remaining gas in the hose line burns off. Then turn off your burner controls so that no gas remains trapped within the hose. Allow your barbecue some significant 'cooling off' time prior to covering it.

Your propane cylinder

Propane is an economical and portable fuel that provides heat, cooks food, and generates light. It is used as a gas, but stored as a liquid in cylinders that can vary in size. The most common, the 'backyard barbecue size' is the 20-pound cylinder. When it is properly filled, 80% of the tank will contain liquid propane leaving the remaining 20% above the liquid to contain the propane vapour.

In Canada propane cylinders must be inspected and requalified, or replaced every 10 years. You can view the date that your cylinder was last qualified on the collar of the cylinder. It is also possible that a cylinder less than 10 years old may need replacing. A rusty and damaged cylinder could mean that you're ready for a new one. When you make your purchase, make sure to turn your old cylinder in so that it can be purged and recycled or disposed of.

New propane cylinders must be purged to release all of the air and moisture within before it is filled with propane. In Canada, only a properly trained and certified attendant is permitted to fill a tank. An attendant is not permitted to fill an outdated cylinder, or fill any cylinder tank beyond 80% of its capacity.

How to change my BBQ cylinder

- Make sure that you take your time while replacing your empty cylinder. Ensure that the special plug provided is threaded onto the outlet of the service valve when you disconnect the hose.
- Carry the empty cylinder in the upright position with the safety valve on top.
- Transport the empty upright cylinder on the floor of the passenger compartment in your vehicle for safety reasons. Secure it so that it cannot topple over while you are driving. Keep the windows open. (Note: Never leave a propane cylinder inside a parked vehicle with the windows sealed - as heat builds up, it could potentially cause an explosion). Refrain from smoking in your vehicle at this time.
- Secure the new cylinder in place on the BBQ before you reconnect it. After reconnecting it, check for leakage using the soap and water solution.

- Older style propane cylinders are required to be tightened with a wrench. Turning in a counter clockwise direction can tighten their left-hand threads. Newer style propane cylinder fittings do not require a wrench and tighten in a clockwise direction.
- If your barbecue connection has an "O" ring, make sure you check it for fractures and cracks every time you replace your cylinder.
- Never smoke while handling a propane cylinder.
- Do not store extra propane cylinders beneath your barbecue or inside any structure as excess heat could cause the cylinder to release overpressure and propane along with it.

Tips for charcoal grilling

- Ensure that your charcoal briquette barbecue is well ventilated as poisonous gases like carbon monoxide are released from the briquettes.
- Do not use gasoline to prompt your charcoal briquettes to ignite quickly, instead use a proper charcoal lighting fluid. Allow the fluid to settle for a few minutes so that the explosive vapours have a chance to dissipate.
- Stand back from the grill a safe distance while lighting the briquettes. Make sure you did not spill any lighting fluid onto your clothing or the area around the actual grill. Prior to igniting the briquettes, ensure that the can of fluid has been placed at a safe distance from the BBQ.
- If the briquettes begin to die out, refrain from spraying the lighting fluid onto the hot coals, which could result in a very dangerous and explosive situation.
- When you are done grilling, make sure that your hot coals are fully extinguished before you dispose of them. Hot coals are very dangerous and can easily start a garbage can fire.

Enjoy your summer barbecue but remember...

- Keep children and pets far away from a hot grill, and never leave them unsupervised in the area of an ignited barbecue.
- Never use wood, charcoal briquettes, barbecue starter fluid or gasoline in conjunction with your propane or natural gas barbecue. Doing so is likely to result in a highly flammable and volatile situation that may cause extensive damage to your property, personal injury or loss of life.
- Barbecue in an open outdoor space due to ventilation and safety reasons. Keep the barbecue at least 3 metres from windows and doors.
- Keep the barbecue away from wooden fences, wooden walls, combustible overhead roofs, and from trees with low branches.
- Don't allow an accumulation of grease to occur by keeping your grill and burners clean - this will help to minimize the chances that you will have a serious grease fire.
- Never fight a grease fire with water - this will only cause the flames to flare up. Keep loose clothing away from a hot barbecue - roll up your sleeves or cook in a short sleeved shirt. If your clothing catches on fire, quickly Stop, Drop and Roll.

- Use long handled tongs and brushes while grilling that put an extra bit of distance between you and the flames.
- Wear oven mitts and a heavy apron to protect yourself from fire while grilling.
- If you do burn yourself, run the affected area under cool water for five minutes. If your burn is serious (charring, blistering) seek medical attention right away.

* Select Information taken from Magazine 'SummerSmart' published by TSSA and the Fire Marshal's Public Fire Safety Council.

In case of fire or an emergency, call 9-1-1

Kitchen Fire Safety

Too hot to handle: Putting a lid on kitchen fires

Be constantly alert to cooking habits

More fires begin in the kitchen than any other room in the home. In fact, residential cooking is one of the leading causes of fire-related deaths. The majority of kitchen fires begin with cooking equipment. Number one on the list of fire sources are stoves, including microwave ovens.

- Keep pot handles turned toward the back of the stove: a small child could pull on a handle extending out at the front of a stove and be burned or scalded by the pot's contents. Avoid loose clothing while cooking: loose clothing can brush heating elements and easily catch fire.
- Never leave food cooking unattended on the stove.
- Never store frequently used items above the stove where you may be burned reaching over the hot stove to get them.
- Remove pans of cooking fat or oils from the stove when not in use - it's easy to accidentally turn on the wrong burner.

To help prevent kitchen fires

- Keep stove and oven clean because built-up grease and food particles are easily ignited. Keep combustibles (i.e. curtains, dish towels, plastic or wood utensils, newspapers, grocery bags) away from the stove, oven and all appliances.
- Unplug kettles, frying pans and other appliances when not in use.

In case of a grease or pan fire

- Turn off the stove. Smother flames with a pot lid or larger pan, if possible. Protect your hand with an oven mitt or wrapped dish towel.
- Use of an approved portable fire extinguisher only if you are familiar with its safe operation.

- Never throw water or use flour on a grease fire.
- In case of an oven fire, close the oven door and turn off the oven.
- Never touch or attempt to carry a flaming pot. The contents may spill, spread or burn you.
- If the fire is not brought under control immediately, get you and your family out and call 9-1-1.

What if I accidentally make contact with a flame or hot surface?

- If your clothing catches fire: stop where you are, drop to the ground, and roll back and forth to put the fire out.
- Immediately cool a burn with cool running water under a tap for five to ten minutes and then seek medical attention.

How safe is my microwave oven?

Microwave ovens are safe appliances, but if you accidentally place a twist-tie or other piece of metal inside an oven, "arcing" may occur and pose a danger.

- In case of fire, unplug the appliance and do not open the microwave door until the flames are out.

What other steps can I take to prevent kitchen fires?

- Make stove controls easy to read from a distance - perhaps mark "off" with a bright red dot.
- Examine the stove and oven, toasters, coffee makers, and other cooking devices for signs of cracking, fraying or wear on cords and plugs.
- Look for signs of overheating.
- Check for recognized testing laboratory labels to show that the unit has been well designed.
- Keep matches out of reach of children. Explain the dangers to your children.

Fire extinguishment and evacuation

- A dry chemical fire extinguisher belongs in the kitchen. Mount it to the wall near an exit and not too close to the stove.
- Know when and how to operate your extinguisher; read the label carefully for directions.
- Remember, your first priority is to evacuate and call the Fire Department at 9-1-1. When purchasing electrical appliances and fixtures, look for the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) seal of approval. This is your assurance that the CSA has tested the products for shock and fire hazards. Ontario Hydro requires that only CSA tested and listed electrical appliances and fixtures be used in Ontario.

- When purchasing fire extinguishers and smoke alarms, look for the Underwriters' Laboratories of Canada (ULC) label. This is your assurance that the ULC has tested the equipment and that it will perform satisfactorily provided you use it and/or install it in accordance with the listing specifications.

In case of fire or an emergency, call 9-1-1.

Holiday Safety

Each year, many tragic residential fires happen during the holiday season. Most can be prevented. To ensure your happy holiday doesn't turn into a disaster, you need to follow some extra important fire safety precautions.

Supervise children

- Don't leave small children alone in the home - even for a moment.
- Teach children to stay away from candles, fireplaces, trees and space heaters.
- Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach.
- Keep electric toys away from natural or artificial trees and paper decorations.
- When buying presents for children, check for flame retardancy labels.

Christmas trees

Natural trees

- Buy the freshest, greenest Christmas tree you can find.
- Trees that are too dry have brittle branches that shed needles easily.
- Test twigs and needles for flexibility. A dry tree will break, not bend.
- Store the tree outdoors, preferably in shade, until you're ready to use it.
- Cut one or two inches diagonally from the base of the tree.
- Mount the tree securely in a large reservoir type stand that includes a water receptacle at the base to keep bottom of tree submerged in water.
- Add water each day, always keeping the water level of the reservoir above the cut.
- Keep the tree away from candles, fireplaces, heating vents, radiators, television sets, or other sources of heat.
- Make sure your tree doesn't block fire exits.
- Keep a multi-purpose dry chemical fire extinguisher on hand.
- Use decorations that are flame-resistant or non-combustible.
- Turn light strings off before you go to bed and when you leave the house.
- Discard the tree when it begins to turn brown or dry out.

Artificial trees

- Artificial trees must have a fire-retardant label.

- Metal or aluminum trees are conductors of electricity. Don't decorate them with strings of lights or with any electrical product .

For detailed information on portable fire extinguishers and their use, visit our Fire Extinguishers information page.

Space heaters must have a Canadian Standards Association (CSA) label.

Space heaters need space

- Keep portable and space heaters at least 1 metre (3 feet) away from anything combustible including paper, drapes, loose clothes furniture, bedding and wallpaper.
- Never place clothes on a heater to dry.
- Avoid leaving heaters on when you leave the house or go to bed.
- Keep children well away from heaters.

Decorative lighting

Indoor lights

- Examine light strings for wear or damage each year before re-using them. Replace worn sets.
- Before replacing burnt out lights, unplug the light string.
- Unplug all decorative lighting before you go to bed or leave your home.
- Only use light strings, bulb reflectors, electrically lit decorations and extension cords that bear a CSA label and are marked for indoor use.

Outdoor lights

- Only use CSA labelled light strings and cords that are marked for outdoor use.
- Turn off electricity to the outlet before working with outdoor wiring.
- Use insulated tape, not nails or tacks to hold strings of lights in place.
- Don't tape cords over, under, or along metal eaves troughs.
- Run all outdoor cords above ground, keeping them out of puddles and snow.
- To prevent moisture from entering bulb sockets, turn the bulbs to face the ground.

Fireplaces

- Have a professional inspect and clean your chimney at least once a year.
- Always use a fire screen.
- Burn only materials appropriate for a fireplace.
- Never burn trash or paper - burning paper can fly out your chimney.
- Put ashes in metal containers and never store them in your home.

Candles

- Always stand candles in stable, non-tip candle holders before you light them.
- Keep candles away from combustible decorations and displays.
- Never leave candles burning unattended or within reach of pets or small children.
- Extinguish candles by wetting their wicks before you leave a room or before going to sleep.

Holiday parties

- Use flame-retardant or non-combustible decorations and costumes.
- Set up a designated smoking area outside with large, deep ashtrays, and soak the butts with water before dumping them in the trash.
- Ask smokers to take it outside to reduce the risk of indoor fires and protect people from being exposed to harmful second-hand smoke.
- Smokers need watchers. Before going to sleep, check under and around sofa cushions and upholstered furniture for smouldering cigarettes.

Further information

When purchasing electrical appliances and fixtures look for a Canadian Standards Association (CSA) seal of approval. This is your assurance that the CSA has tested the product for shock and fire hazards. Only CSA tested and listed electrical appliances and fixtures are permitted in Ontario.

When purchasing fire extinguishers and smoke alarms, look for an Underwriters' Laboratories of Canada (ULC) label. This is your assurance that the ULC has tested the equipment and it will perform satisfactorily provided you use and install it according to the manufacturer's specifications.

In case of fire or an emergency, call 9-1-1.

Workplace Fire Safety

Make it your business to know

Fire can break out anywhere, including where you work. Each year numerous fires in the workplace cause injury and property loss.

If a fire started in your office or in the building where you work, would you know what to do? Do you know your workplace evacuation procedures in the event of an alarm? What can you do to prevent fires in your workplace?

Knowing the answers to these questions and following a few simple fire safety procedures can prevent tragic and wasteful fire loss in your workplace.

Be prepared!

These procedures are based on your workplace having a fire alarm system and an approved fire safety plan. Your building may not have an alarm system or a detailed fire safety plan. Your workplace fire evacuation procedures may differ. Make it your business to know the fire safety plan and evacuation procedures in your workplace.

Employees should know:

- the location of two exits closest to their work area;
- the location of the nearest fire alarm pull station and how to use it;
- the phone number for the Fire Department (**9-1-1**);
- your responsibilities in a fire, which are in the fire safety plan; the fire emergency procedures posted on your floor.

Employers are responsible for:

- preparing and implementing the Fire Safety Plan;
- informing employees of the Fire Safety Plan;
- posting fire emergency procedures on each floor;
- conducting regular fire drills with all employees.

If you discover a fire

The use of extinguishers

- Activate the nearest fire alarm pull station on the fire floor.
- Leave the area immediately, closing all doors behind you.
- Take keys with you.
- Go to the nearest exit and leave the building. Close all doors behind you.
- If you encounter smoke, consider taking an alternate stairwell/exit. Heat and smoke rise leaving cleaner air near the floor. Crawl low under smoke.
- Call the Fire Department at **9-1-1** regardless of the size of the fire. Never assume this has been done.
- Give correct address, location of fire and your name.

Most workplaces contain portable fire extinguishers. Fire extinguishers can only put out small, contained fires, such as a fire in a wastebasket. The extinguisher in your workplace may or may not be suitable for dealing with grease or electrical fires.

If you have not been trained in the proper use of portable extinguishers, do not attempt to fight a fire.

Never fight a fire:

- if the fire is large or spreading;

- if your escape route may be blocked by the spread of fire;
- if you are not trained in the correct use of the extinguisher or are unsure of the type of fire.

If you do fight a fire:

- call the Fire Department first at **9-1-1**;
- ensure everyone has evacuated or is leaving the area/building;
- only fight a small fire.

For more information on portable fire extinguishers and their use, visit our fire extinguishers information page.

Fire prevention tips for a safer workplace

Smoking

- Smoke only in areas allowed.
- Use large, non-tip ashtrays. Do not empty contents into wastebaskets.
- Check for smouldering cigarettes on furniture and in wastebaskets.

Wiring

- Check and replace any electrical cords that have cracked insulation or broken connectors.
- Avoid octopus wiring.
- Do not run extension cords across doorways or under rugs.
- Avoid plugging more than one extension cord into an outlet.
- Use only CSA (Canadian Standards Association) approved power bars.

Appliances

- Use only CSA approved appliances.
- Leave enough space for the circulation of air around heaters and other equipment such as computer terminals and copy machines.
- Keep all appliances a safe distance from combustible materials.
- Always turn off or unplug appliances at the end of each day.

Arson

Arson is one of the leading causes of fire in the workplace. To prevent or minimize the risk of fire due to arson, remember:

- to be aware of your building security procedures;
- report any type of vandalism and notify security and/or police of suspicious behaviour and visitors;

- lock doors after working hours;
- ensure areas around your building are free of combustibles and are well lit;
- keep all halls, lobbies and areas used by the public clear of obstructions.

In case of fire or an emergency, call 9-1-1