

Top Ten Home Safety Tips

Fire extinguishers: Every home should have one multi-purpose fire extinguisher on every level of the home and one extinguisher for the garage. It is a good idea to have a larger extinguisher in your garage because flammable liquids are most likely stored and used there. Fire extinguishers should be mounted no higher than 5 feet off the floor in a spot near the exit that is visible and unblocked by storage. Make sure everyone living in the home knows how to use the equipment.



Smoke detectors: Most home fires occur while the occupants are asleep. Smoke detectors should be installed on every level of the home, especially in or near sleeping areas. They should be tested monthly and replaced every five years unless the manufacturer recommends otherwise.

Carbon monoxide detector: Any fuel-burning appliance in a home is a possible source of carbon monoxide (CO), an odorless, colorless — and deadly — gas. Install a CO detector/alarm in the hallway near every separate sleeping area of the home. All CO detectors should display the Underwriters Laboratory (UL) label. Replace CO detectors every five years unless the manufacturer recommends sooner.



Ground-fault circuit interrupters: These electronic devices monitor the electricity flowing in a circuit. If an imbalance occurs, the GFCI interrupts power faster than a blink of an eye to prevent a lethal dose of electricity. Install Ground-fault circuit interrupters in bathrooms, kitchens, the laundry room, outdoor receptacles, and the garage. Test them monthly to insure proper operation.

Properly marked shutoffs: Tag your home shutoff valves for gas, oil, and water, and the main shutoff for the electrical supply. Know how to safely turn off these services.

Utility ladder/stepstool: Using a ladder or stepstool to get to hard-to-reach places is safer than climbing on stacked boxes or using a chair, which could lead to injury.

Emergency phone list: Important phone numbers should be posted by each telephone in the home including fire, police, EMT/ambulance, doctors, and poison control.

Emergency evacuation plan: There should be two ways to exit each room, especially sleeping areas. All occupants of the home should help create the plan and test it on a regular basis.

Special considerations for homes with children:

- ➔ Child-safety gates at top and bottom of the stairwells
- ➔ Locking cabinets for household cleaners, pesticides, pool cleaners, matches, lighters, and other flammable liquids
- ➔ Child-proof section in the medicine cabinet
- ➔ Cabinet locks for kitchen and bathroom
- ➔ Plastic safety caps on electrical outlets
- ➔ Metal fire screen covering the fireplace
- ➔ Edge guards for sharp-edged furniture
- ➔ Protective surfacing around and under playground equipment



Special considerations for homes with pools:

- ➔ Life preservers and Rescue equipment
- ➔ A lockable cabinet for pool chemicals
- ➔ A four-foot fence with self-closing and latching gate
- ➔ A poolside telephone

