

FIRE SAFETY FOR SENIORS

The two leading causes of fire deaths and injuries in older adults are smoking materials and the misuse of portable space heaters.

TIPS TO REMEMBER:

- Smokers should have a designated smoking area away from upholstered materials, such as the kitchen table.
- Never smoke in bed especially while reading - it is too easy to fall asleep. Newspapers and print materials are highly flammable.
- Sleep with the bedroom door closed. This may give more time to escape if a fire occurs.
- Keep space heaters well ventilated and at least three feet away from flammable materials. Unplug space heaters when not in use.
- Extension cords are for temporary use only and should not be used with a space heater or electric blanket.
- Never run electrical cords under a carpet or rug.

SMOKE ALARMS CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE!

Smoke alarms are inexpensive and easy to install. For assistance with the location and installation of smoke alarms, call the local fire department.

- Make sure there is a working smoke alarm on every floor in the home and outside the sleeping areas.
- Have a friend or relative test your smoke alarm while you are asleep to make sure you can hear it.
- Contact your local Fire Department, friend or relative to perform the following tasks:
 - Once a month, test the battery by pushing the test button or drifting smoke from a snuffed-out candle into the alarm.
 - Once a year change the smoke alarm battery.
 - Once a year clean the smoke alarm by opening the cover and gently vacuuming the unit with the soft brush attachment.
 - Replace smoke alarms if they are more than 10 years old.

FIRE ESCAPE PLANNING SAVES LIVES:

- Develop and practice a fire escape plan. Be sure to include all hallways and stairs in your escape plan.
- Know two ways out of every room and how to escape from all levels of your home.
- Make sure all doors and windows can be unlocked or opened.

IN CASE OF FIRE - GET OUT AND STAY OUT - NEVER GO BACK INTO A BURNING BUILDING

- Crawl low near the floor to the nearest exit maintaining contact with the wall.
- Test the door by feeling it with the back of your hand - if it is hot, DO NOT OPEN, and use second way out.
- If door and knob are cool, stay low with your shoulder against the door, open slowly. Be ready to close door if smoke and heat rush in.
- If trapped, put as many closed doors as possible between you and the fire, and seal all cracks in doors and windows with towels or bedding.
- If clothing catches on fire, STOP where you are, DROP gently to the ground, cover your face with your hands, and ROLL back and forth to put out the flames.
- Cool burns in cold water.