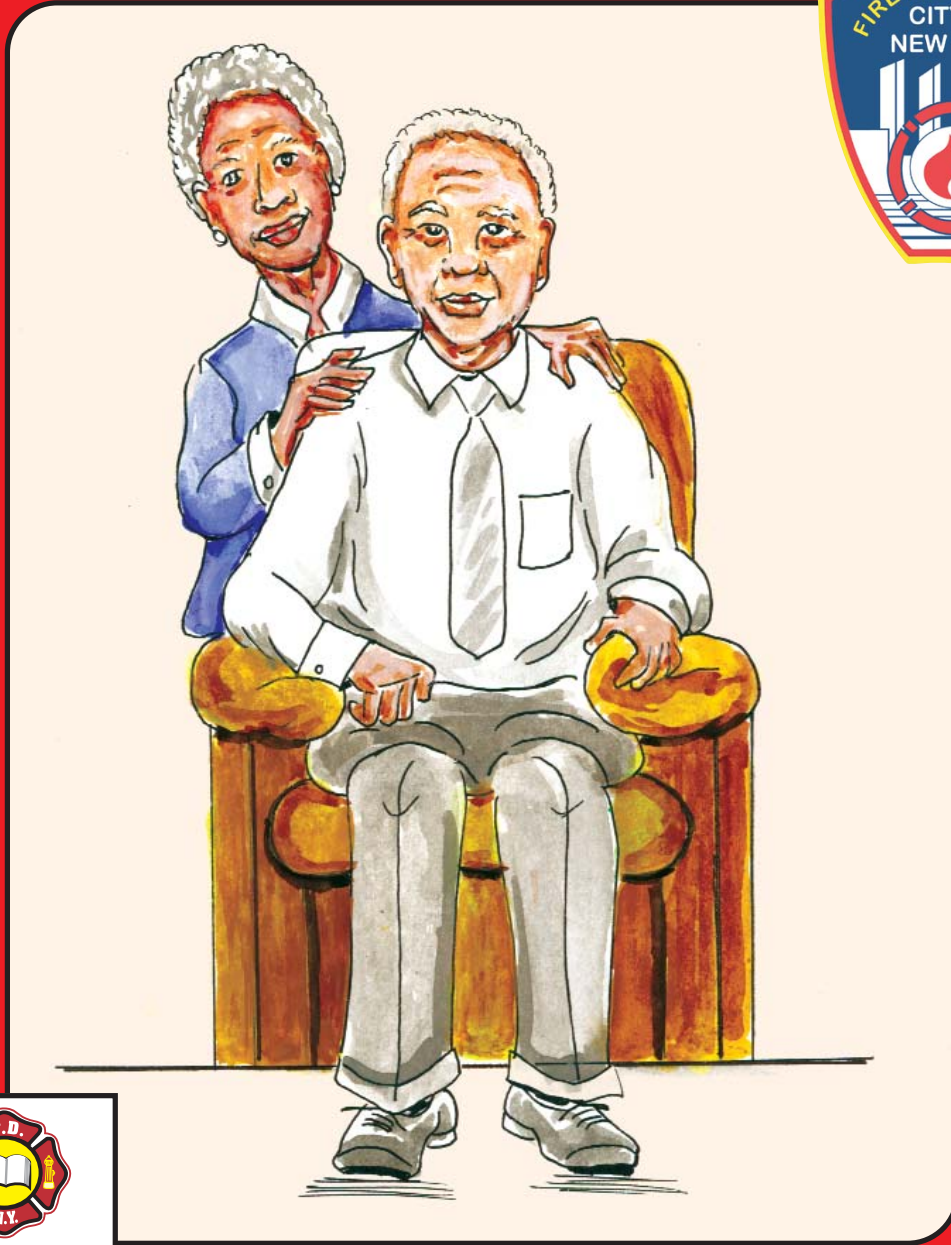


FIRE SAFETY FOR SENIORS AND THEIR CAREGIVERS





**Proudly Serving New York City
Since 1865**



Keep Back 200 Feet

***This booklet is designed to inform
seniors and their caregivers about fire safety.***

*It's a fact that older adults,
aged 65 and more,
die in home fires far more often
than the rest of the population.*

*However, you can **retire** fire by
taking care of yourself and influencing
others, such as your neighbors,
friends and family, about fire safety.*

*People can and have saved
their own lives and the lives
of others by following a
few simple safety precautions.*



LET'S KEEP YOU AND YOUR FAMILY FIRE SAFE

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SMOKERS BEWARE



**SMOKERS ARE SEVEN TIMES MORE LIKELY THAN
NONSMOKERS TO BE FIRE VICTIMS.**

SMOKING MATERIALS ARE THE NUMBER ONE CAUSE OF HOME FIRES THAT KILL SENIORS.

If you or others in your home smoke, stop fires before they start by:

- Using large, deep, non-tip ashtrays. Never leave a lighted cigarette in an ashtray or leave an ashtray on the arm of a couch or chair.
- Checking between, on and under upholstery and cushions for cigarette butts that may be smoldering before going to bed or going out.
- Dousing cigarette butts completely with water before discarding them.
- Making it a ***RULE*** to never smoke in bed or while lying down, especially when you are drowsy or taking medication that makes you sleepy.
- **Never** permitting smoking around the storage or use of an oxygen tank.

RECIPE FOR KITCHEN SAFETY

Follow this recipe for safety and you will prevent most cooking fires.

Ingredients:

2 watchful eyes

**1 or 2 potholders/
oven mitts**

**2 short or tight-fitting
sleeves**

**1 clean area around the
stove, free of anything
that can burn**

1 pot lid

**1 large box of
baking soda**



**COMBINE THE ABOVE INGREDIENTS CAREFULLY
TO PREVENT COOKING FIRES.**

COOKING ACCIDENTS ARE THE LEADING CAUSE OF FIRE AND FIRE INJURIES IN THE HOME.

Remember to “*stand by your pan*” and never leave cooking food unattended. Heat cooking oils gradually and use extra caution when deep-frying. Turn pot handles inward, away from the front of the stove.

Always wear short or tight-fitting sleeves. Long, loose sleeves are more likely to catch fire or get caught on pot handles, overturning pots and causing scalds.

Cook at low to medium temperature settings rather than higher settings. Clean your cooking equipment regularly so that there are no cooking materials, food items or grease accumulation.

SHOULD A STOVE FIRE OCCUR:

- Turn off the stove.
- Use baking soda to extinguish the flame.
- Slide the pan lid onto the pan.

DO NOT USE WATER!

Water will cause splashing and spread the fire. Do not attempt to pick up the pot or pan and carry it away from the stove.

BURN CONCERN



COOL A BURN.

OLDER ADULTS USUALLY HAVE A MORE SEVERE REACTION TO BURNS.

Burns can be caused by direct contact with an open flame, hot liquids/grease or from a hot surface. **Many burns may be deeper than they appear and require immediate medical attention.**

IF YOU GET A BURN

- **Cool the burn with cold running water.**
- **Cover the burn with a sterile pad or clean sheet.**
- **Never apply ointment, grease or butter to the burned area.**
- **Seek immediate medical attention to prevent burn inflammation and infections.**

PLUG INTO ELECTRICAL SAFETY



THE POTENTIAL FOR ELECTRICAL SHOCK OR FIRE FROM ELECTRICAL WIRING AND APPLIANCES IS VERY REAL.

PREVENT ELECTRICAL FIRES BY FOLLOWING THESE PRECAUTIONS:

- Use light bulbs with the appropriate wattage for the size of the light fixture. A bulb with too many watts may lead to overheating and fire.
- Use extension cords for temporary use only.
- Protect all electrical cords from damage. Do not run cords under carpets or rugs or hang from nails.
- When purchasing an electrical appliance, such as a toaster or coffee maker, be sure that the equipment has the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) Mark, which shows that the product has been safety tested.
- Never use an appliance with a damaged or frayed cord.
- Replace unsafe electrical appliances, such as coffeepots and toaster ovens.
- Give televisions, stereos and computers plenty of clearance to prevent overheating.
- To prevent overloading, never plug more than two appliances into an outlet at once or "piggyback" extra appliances on extension cords or wall outlets.
- Ensure that outlet and switch plates are in good condition. If the outlet or plate is hot to the touch, immediately unplug the cord and have a qualified electrician check your wiring.

If an appliance develops a different smell, makes unusual sounds or the cord feels warm to the touch, pull the plug and discontinue use. If the appliance continues to burn or smoke, call the Fire Department (911).

STAYING WARM SAFELY



SPACE HEATERS

**MANY PEOPLE USE SPACE HEATERS TO KEEP WARM,
ESPECIALLY DURING COLD WEATHER MONTHS.
HOWEVER, SPACE HEATERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR TWO OF EVERY THREE
HOME-HEATING FIRES.**

KEEP WARM SAFELY BY FOLLOWING THESE GUIDELINES:

- When purchasing an electric space heater, look for heaters with automatic shut-off features.
- Only use equipment that has the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) Mark, which shows that the product has been safety tested.
- ***Give Space Heaters Space.*** Place the heater at least three feet from any combustible material, such as bedding and furniture.
- Keep young children and pets away from space heaters.
- While heater cords normally become warm during use, stop using the heater if the cord becomes hot.
- ***Never*** use an extension cord with a space heater.
- Place the heater on the floor; never place on a counter top or furniture.
- Turn off/unplug the space heater whenever you leave the room or go to sleep.

The use of kerosene or propane space heaters is strictly prohibited and illegal in New York City. These space heaters pose a high risk of death and injury.

STAYING WARM SAFELY



ELECTRIC BLANKETS

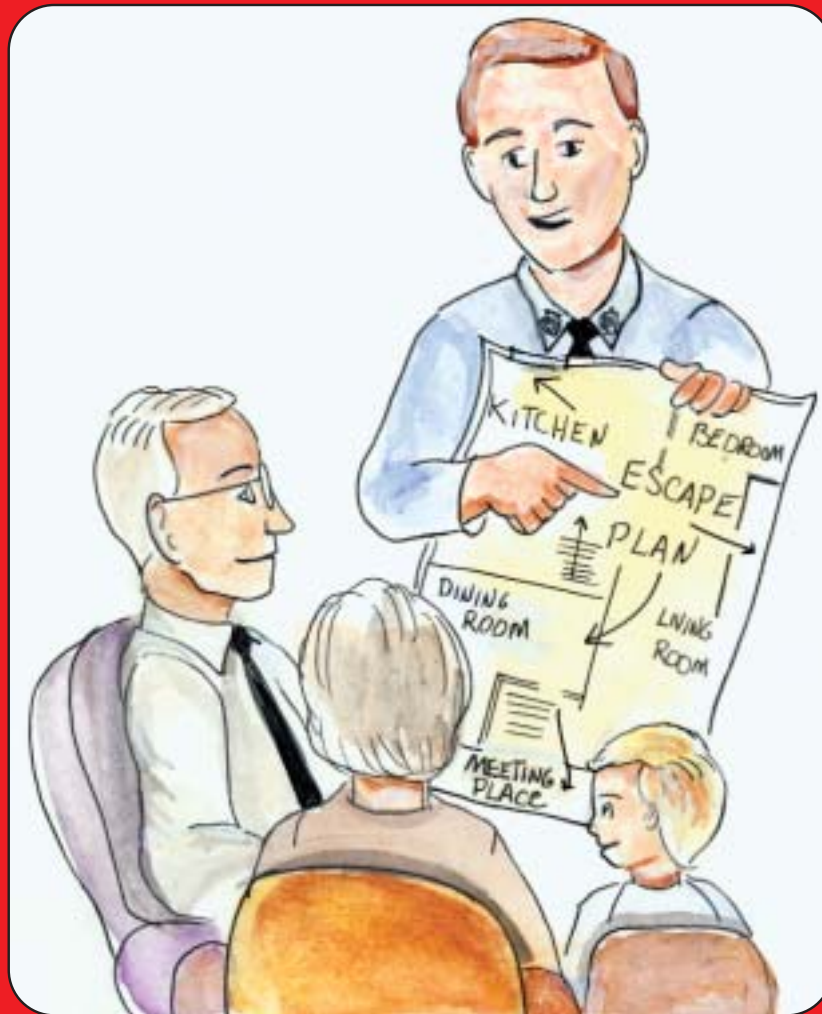
OLD OR DAMAGED ELECTRIC BLANKETS CAUSE THOUSANDS OF FIRES A YEAR THAT RESULT IN DEATHS AND INJURIES.

ADULTS AGED 65 YEARS OR MORE ARE AT THE GREATEST RISK OF FATAL INJURIES. FOLLOW THESE PRECAUTIONS TO GREATLY REDUCE YOUR RISK.

- Only use electric blankets that have the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) Mark, which shows that the product has been safety tested.
- Discontinue the use of any electric blanket that has broken or frayed cords.
- Avoid tucking the electric blanket in at the sides of the bed. This can cause excessive heat build-up.
- Avoid placing other blankets or comforters on top of an electric blanket while it is in use.
- Never use an electric blanket that is wet, soiled or wrinkled.
- It is best to warm the bed with your electric blanket and turn it off before going to bed.
- Wash your electric blanket infrequently, because repeated washings can damage the electrical circuitry.

***If your electric blanket is more than 10 years old,
the best advice is to buy a new one!***

DON'T BE SCARED — BE PREPARED



**CAN YOU SURVIVE A FIRE IN YOUR HOME?
MORE THAN HALF THE HOME FIRE DEATHS OCCUR BETWEEN
10:00 P.M. AND 6:00 A.M., WHEN MOST PEOPLE ARE SLEEPING.**

BE PREPARED BY HAVING AN ESCAPE PLAN. IT IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO SAVE YOUR OWN LIFE!

- If you live in a multi-story home, consider sleeping on the ground floor near an exit.
- Know at least two exits from every room.
- If you live in an apartment building, know where the exit stairwells are located.
- Make sure a phone is next to your bed and within reach (or a TTY/TDD device, if you use one).
- Keep your eyeglasses and hearing aids (if necessary) within reach next to your bed.
- Make sure lamp or light switches are within reach.
- If your fire escape window has security bars or a gate, make sure it is FDNY approved for fire escape windows. (Approved gates are stamped with the FDNY approval number.)
- Practice unlocking and opening the windows, security gates and doors.
- Keep stairways and exits clear of clutter and storage. Do not store anything on building fire escapes.

WILL YOUR SMOKE ALARM WAKE YOU IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT?



A SMOKE ALARM IS THE SINGLE MOST VALUABLE LIFESAVING DEVICE YOU CAN HAVE IN YOUR HOME.

FOLLOW THESE SAFETY TIPS TO ENSURE THAT YOU WILL HAVE AN EARLY WARNING IN CASE OF FIRE:

- Have at least one operable smoke alarm installed on each level of your home and outside each sleeping area.
- Chirping alarms are warnings that the battery is low. Replace batteries twice a year, in spring and fall, when clocks are changed for daylight-saving time.
- Purchase alarms with a 10-year lithium battery to eliminate the need to change the batteries every six months. Lithium batteries are more expensive than typical 9-volt batteries; however, they are designed to last the life of the alarm. This will eliminate the need to change your smoke alarm battery every six months. However, the alarm battery still must be tested once a month.
- If you are hearing-impaired, install smoke alarms with strobe (flashing) lights. These alarms feature a special, high-density light that can wake a sleeping person.
- Install smoke alarms with a hush or silence button feature for nuisance alarms due to cooking vapors or steam. This feature allows you to silence the unit for 10 to 15 minutes while you clear the air, *rather than removing the battery*. Some smoke alarms can be temporarily silenced and tested by using a TV remote.
- Install **photoelectric-type** smoke alarms, which are the most reliable for smoldering fires, which often occur in bedrooms or sitting rooms.

KNOW WHAT TO DO



**PLANNING IS THE KEY TO PROTECTING YOURSELF
AND YOUR FAMILY.**

IF THERE IS A FIRE:

- Do not try to fight the fire yourself.
- Get out and stay out. Do not try to gather personal possessions.
- *Close the door on your way out!*
- If smoke is present, exit as low to the ground as possible and keep your mouth covered.
- If you are trapped, close all the doors between you and the fire and call the Fire Department (911). Tell them where you are located.
- *Do not use the elevator.*
- Call 911 once you reach a safe location.

IF ANY PART OF YOU OR YOUR CLOTHING CATCHES FIRE:

- Do not run or try to put out the fire with your hands.
- Cover your face with your hands.
- Drop to the ground and roll over and over.

If physical limitations prevent you from taking these steps, try to smother the flames with a fire-resistant wool blanket or rug.

YOUR HOME FIRE SAFETY CHECK LIST

Use this check list as a guide to identify possible fire safety problems in your home. If you check **NO** to any question, the potential hazard should be corrected to reduce your risk and increase your preparedness for fire.



YES NO

- Do you have at least one operable smoke alarm?
- Do you have at least one operable carbon monoxide alarm?
- Are all electrical cords in good condition (not frayed or cracked)?
- Are all electrical cords in the open, not run under rugs or through doorways?
- Are space heaters placed at least three feet from combustibles?
- Are space heaters plugged directly into wall sockets and not into extension cords?

YES NO

- Is your apartment door fireproof and self-closing?
- Is your fire escape window clear and unobstructed?
- If you have a security gate, is it FDNY approved?
- Can all windows be opened easily from the inside?
- Are building stairways free of storage and rubbish?
- Are stairway fire doors fireproof and self-closing?
- Are stairway fire doors kept closed?
- Are exit lights in the stairway in good working order?
- Do you have operable flashlights handy?
- Do you have a fire escape plan?

Immediately correct problems or hazards that are within your control or responsibility. Notify the building owner of all other problems.

If necessary, you may file a complaint by calling the New York City Fire Department at 718-999-2541 or 311.

YOUR SAFETY IS OUR MISSION



www.nyc.gov/fdny

Michael Bloomberg, Mayor
Nicholas Scoppetta, Fire Commissioner

Produced By

FDNY Office of Fire Safety Education and FDNY Office of Public Information

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Printed with a grant from the FDNY Fire Safety Education Fund.

www.fdnfirezone.org



Funded in part through the

Fire Prevention and Safety Grant Program

Department of Homeland Security - U.S. Fire Administration