

PROTECT Yourself from FIRE



MISSISSAUGA

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Each year in Ontario approximately 100 people die and thousands are injured as a result of fire. Most of these victims were as a result of fires that were preventable.

The information in this brochure should assist you to understand how to protect yourself and your family but in order to do so, you must take full responsibility. This will give you the best chance to stay safe and survive fire in case it happens.

Why are you in charge? Well it's simple, because despite the best efforts of fire departments, most people die in fires before the fire services arrive, even with a response time of less than 5 minutes.

The key to fire safety is to learn and practice the three lines of defence.

- 1. Fire Prevention**
- 2. Detection**
- 3. Escape**

For further information please call Mississauga Fire and Emergency Services, Public Education **905-896-5908** or visit our website **www.mississauga.ca**

1. FIRE PREVENTION

Over 90% of residential fires are preventable !

It only makes sense that the best way to protect yourself is not to have a fire in the first place. Understanding the causes of fire and practicing good fire safety habits can greatly reduce the chance that you will have a fire.

The top causes of residential fires are:

- Cooking Equipment
- Heating Equipment
- Electrical Distribution Equipment
- Lit Smoker's Articles
- Candles
- Matches or Lighters

(Please note that it is impossible to list every cause of fire and preventative measures to take. Most of the time common sense should be your guide).

In order to prevent these types of fires from occurring here are some prevention strategies:

COOKING EQUIPMENT

The most common cause of cooking fires is the ignition of oils or greases which have been left on the stove unattended.

To prevent cooking fires:

- Stay in the kitchen and pay attention to what you're cooking.
- If you have to leave the kitchen, turn off the cooking equipment until you return.

- Keep a large pot or pan lid nearby to cover and smother a fire in case it starts. If a fire starts in a pot or pan, slide the lid over it to smother and turn off the burner. Do not use water and do not move the pot or pan as it may be too hot.
- Keep ovens clean.
- Keep toasters, kettles and other small heat producing appliances clean and unplugged when not in use.

Additional Cooking Safety Tips:

- Keep pot/pan handles turned in so children can't reach.
- Don't reach across burners.
- Wear fitted clothing when working around the stove.
- Keep combustibles away from cooking surfaces.

Kitchen fire
when cooking
left unattended.



HEATING EQUIPMENT

The most common cause of heating fires involves fireplaces, wood stoves and chimneys.

To prevent heating fires:

- Follow building regulations and manufacturer's instructions for installations and clearances.
- Inspect your chimney regularly and have them cleaned by a WETT certified technician. See www.wettinc.ca for a technician near you.
The Ontario Fire Code requires an inspection at least once per year and cleaning when required.
- Ensure stovepipe connections are tight.
- Check walls for excessive heat which may be an indication of improper clearances.
- Install a spark screen and rain cap at the top of the chimney.
- Ensure spark screens are in place for open hearth fireplaces/wood stoves.
- Protect floors/walls from heat.
- Keep combustibles at least 1.2 metres away from fireplaces, wood stoves and furnaces.
- Give space heaters space. Keep combustibles at least 1 metre away and disconnect before going out or to bed.

ELECTRICAL DISTRIBUTION EQUIPMENT

The most common cause of electrical fires is wiring related.

To prevent electrical fires:

- Have a licensed electrical contractor make repairs or additions to your electrical system.
- Only use electrical equipment and appliances that are approved by a recognized certification agency.

For listing agencies visit **www.esasafe.com** look under electrical product safety.

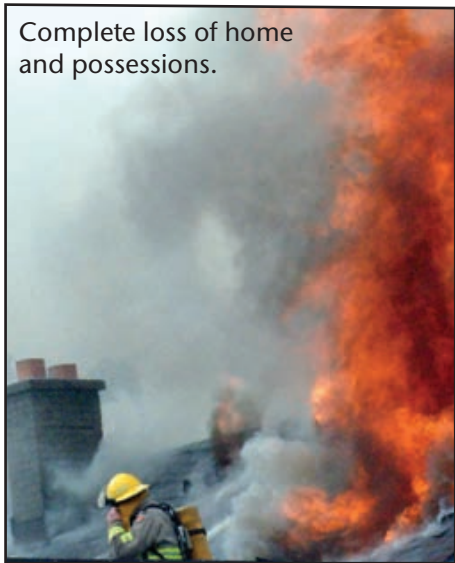
Smoking Related Fires

The most common cause of smoking fires is carelessness due to intoxication or falling asleep. Most of these fires occur in bedrooms or living areas.

To prevent smoking fires:

- Don't smoke if you are impaired by alcohol, medication or drugs.
- Don't smoke in bed or if you are drowsy.
- Never leave lit smokers' materials unattended.
- Use ashtrays that are deep and hold cigarettes firmly.
- Never place lit smokers' materials or the contents of ashtrays in the trash, soak with water first and leave overnight before disposing.

Complete loss of home
and possessions.



- Don't smoke around flammable liquids, gases or flammable substances.

CANDLE FIRES

The most common causes of candle fires is from igniting nearby combustibles due to falling, being knocked over or being too close.

To prevent candle fires:

- Use good quality candles with a non-combustible shade.
- Keep candles in sturdy non-combustible holders on a level surface.
- Keep candles out of the reach of children and pets.
- Keep candles away from combustible materials.
- Extinguish candles when leaving the room or home.

MATCHES AND LIGHTER FIRES

The most common causes of fires from matches and lighter are children playing or intentionally setting fires.

To prevent matches and lighter fires:

- Keep matches and lighters out of reach and out of sight of children, (preferably in a locked container).
- Teach children that matches and lighters are “tools” not toys and to not touch, but tell a grown up if they find them.
- Never let children play with matches or lighters.
- If you are a smoker, keep matches and lighters in a place where you would always know if they were missing (ie. pocket)
- If you know or suspect your child is involved in fire play, help is available.

The TAPP-C educational program is available to children and their parents. Please contact our Public Education unit at 905-896-5908 for details.



2. DETECTION

If a fire starts, it must be detected quickly so you will have time to escape.

SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES

If, despite your best efforts in fire prevention a fire starts, it must be quickly detected by smoke alarms. Early detection could save lives. Every home is required to be equipped with a working smoke alarm on every storey. It's the law!

Did you know that almost 50% of smoke alarms in homes do not work?

How about yours? Test it today!



SMOKE ALARM TIPS:

- Test smoke alarms monthly.
- Change batteries every year (if battery operated).
- Vacuum smoke alarms annually.
- Replace smoke alarms older than 10 years.
- If experiencing nuisance (false) alarms do not remove the battery. Consider an alarm with a “hush feature” or another type of alarm. Check out **www.makeitstop.ca** for tips on reducing or eliminating nuisance alarms.

Please see our supplemental brochure for more information

***Working Smoke Alarms,
It's the Law, It's Your Life***

Fire from suspected
careless smoking.



3. ESCAPE

In case of fire you may have less than one minute to escape.

PLAN YOUR ESCAPE

You need to have an escape plan so that everyone knows what to do and where to go in case of fire. Take time with your family to draw up a floor plan showing all the rooms and exits. You should, if possible, have two ways out of every room. Once out of the building go to a safe meeting place and call 911.

Do not re-enter the building for any reason.

Ensure your escape plan includes any special needs of children, disabled and elderly people.

Please see our supplemental brochure for more information
Home Fire Escape Plan



House fire from unattended candle near combustible material



Note: If you live in an apartment or condo, escaping a fire in your building may be quite different. Please see our supplemental brochure for more information

Fire Safety, for persons who live in multi-unit and multi-level Apartments and Condos.

