



## TOWN OF HARRISBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT

6450 Morehead Road, Harrisburg North Carolina 28075

Phone: 704-455-3574 Fax 704-455-6391

[www.harrisburgfd.com](http://www.harrisburgfd.com)



### Home Fire Prevention Information

**Smoke Alarm Tips:** Smoke alarms are critical to early detection of fires and is one of the most important investments you can make.

Be sure to install smoke alarms every level of the home (including basements and attics), outside sleeping areas and inside bedrooms.

Change your smoke alarm battery every year—such as on your birthday or during daylight savings time to help you remember. Smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years.

If your smoke detectors have sealed long life batteries, the smoke alarms should be disposed of after 10 years

If your smoke alarm begins to chirp, signaling low battery power, replace the batteries immediately to prevent you and your family from being unprotected. Also, make sure everyone in your family know that removing batteries from smoke alarms for just a short period of time could be dangerous.

Regular testing is the only way to make sure your smoke alarms are working. Test your smoke alarms once a month and installing more than one smoke alarm.

**Escape Routes:** Installing working smoke alarms is an essential, but they don't save lives unless everyone knows how to get out of the home safely.

Make sure everyone knows how to escape when the smoke alarm sounds, whether awake or sleeping at the time. Practice escape routes twice a year, both during the day and at night.

In your plan, have two ways to escape out of each room in case the primary way is blocked by flames or smoke. You can create an illustration of escape routes by visiting [www.usfaparents.gov/downloads/escape\\_grid.pdf](http://www.usfaparents.gov/downloads/escape_grid.pdf)

Designate a meeting place for your family outside, such as under a specific tree or at the end of a driveway.

Once you escape a fire, stay outside.



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**If You're In A Fire:** When a fire occurs, do not waste any time saving property. Take the safest exit route, but if you must escape through smoke, remember to crawl low, under the smoke and keep your mouth covered. The smoke contains toxic gases which can disorient you or, at worst, overcome you.

When you come to a closed door, use the back of your hand to feel the top of the door, the doorknob, and the crack between the door and door frame to make sure that fire is not on the other side. If it feels hot, use your secondary escape route. Even if the door feels cool, open it carefully. Brace your shoulder against the door and open it slowly. If heat and smoke comes in, slam the door and use your alternate escape route.

Meet your family at the designated meeting spot. Everyone should stay outside.

**Cooking Fire Prevention Tips:** Cooking equipment accounts for the largest percentage of residential fires. Because of oils used, these fires are most often flaming fires.

Roll up sleeves or, if possible, wear short or tight fitting sleeves when cooking. Loose fitting clothing and sleeves can be dangerous near open flames.

Always keep an eye on food being heated. Unattended cooking causes the majority of fires in the kitchen. If you leave the kitchen, set a timer to remind you that something is on the stove.

Keep children away from appliances when cooking. Teach children to not play in the stove area.

Turn handles inward so pots and pans won't be pulled or knocked off the stove.



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**Check Heating, Cooling Equipment:** Heating and cooling equipment fires constitute the second largest share of residential fires.

Have a professional technician inspect your heating, cooling, and water appliances annually.

Have the fireplace chimney checked and cleaned routinely by a chimney "sweep" at least once a year.

Do not leave a space heater operating unattended or operating while sleeping. Portable electric air heaters are designed for use only as temporary supplemental heating and only while attended.

**Check Electrical Cords, Lighting:** Electrical fires from wiring and lighting are the third leading cause of residential fires. Fire deaths are highest in winter months which call for more indoor activities and an increase in lighting, heating and appliance use.

Install additional outlet receptacles where needed. Extension cords should never be used as a long-term solution for additional outlet receptacles.

Never use damaged electrical cords. Cords can become damaged when run under rugs or furniture. Do not use any electrical cord that is stiff or cracked. The insulation on electrical cords can become damaged by wear, flexing, or age.

Keep combustibles away from light bulbs. Light bulbs, especially halogen types, get very hot and can ignite combustible materials that get too close.

Never place clothing or towels on top of a lampshade. Do not use table lamps without a shade where they might fall over onto a bed or sofa.

Use the correct wattage bulb for the fixture. A too high a wattage bulb can cause the fixture to overheat and start a fire.



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**Safety Around Upholstered Furniture, Mattresses:** Upholstered furniture and mattresses and bedding are the items first ignited and involved in the greatest numbers of fire deaths.

Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of young children.

Exercise caution when using candles. Do not leave candles unattended or lit while sleeping. Candles should be kept away from combustibles. Extinguish candles when you leave the room. If power is out, consider using flashlights instead.

Never smoke in bed and extinguish tobacco products when tired.

Use an ash tray when smoking.

These facts and suggestions are provided by The Harrisburg Fire Department and the federal government's fire safety Web site. For more helpful tips, visit [www.firesafety.gov/index.shtm](http://www.firesafety.gov/index.shtm).