

Fire Safety

City of Lockport Fire Department

FIRE SAFETY TIPS FOR SENIORS

SMOKE DETECTORS

1. Smoke detectors provide valuable protection. Detectors double your chance of surviving fire in your home by providing early warning and valuable time for escape. Install smoke detectors and maintain them.
2. If you cannot install a detector yourself, ask a relative, friend or neighbor. They will help you locate the best spot for the detector and make sure that the detector is installed.
3. At a minimum, you should have a detector immediately outside your sleeping area. The ideal spot is on the ceiling or high on the wall, out of corners where "dead air" space might not capture rising smoke and gases. Detectors should also be placed at the top of open stairways (or at the bottom of enclosed stairways). There should be a detector on every level of your home or apartment.
4. Do not disable your detectors by removing the batteries or disconnecting wires. Doing so could mean the difference between life and death.
5. If your detector goes off because of cooking fumes or steam from the bathroom, you may need to move it or may need a different type of detector.
6. Clean the detectors periodically to keep them free from dust and dirt. Test the batteries. Detectors connected to your house wiring should be tested regularly too.
7. Smoke detector batteries should be changed at least twice a year. Use your birthday or some other major holiday (begin/end of Daylight Savings Time) as your twice annual "Battery Replacement Day".
8. If your landlord or building management is responsible for smoke detectors where you live, call and ask when they last were tested, cleaned or replaced.
9. If the detectors have not been attended to, insist that the party responsible act immediately. If they do not respond, call the Fire Department (439-6724). Smoke detectors are important protection to escape from a fire. You must have a smoke detector. Don't live without one!

HOME ESCAPE PLAN

1. There are three essential items that should be kept at your bedside: a telephone, whistle, and your eyeglasses. You need your glasses to see how to escape from fire and avoid injury. The whistle serves two purposes: It lets people know where you are so that you can be rescued, and enables you to warn other family members of fire. Your first priority in fire is to get out of the building. Don't stop to call the Fire Department until you are safe outside. If you can not escape by the door, telephoning allows you to call for help while attempting to escape by your back up route (e.g. a window, etc.).
2. If you use a wheelchair or walker, check all the exit routes in advance to be sure you can get through the doorways. IF not, map out escape routes that are acceptable, and discuss your escape with your family, the building manager or neighbors.
3. If you have impairments that might make it more difficult for you to escape from fire, consider calling the Fire Department (439=6724) and let us know your special circumstance in advance.
4. Plan your escape route. You should have a primary and back-up route mapped out for each room. Practice getting out. It may seem foolish to do so, or unnecessary (of course you know how to find a front door), but when there is fire or smoke, your reasoning may be affected by the emergency. If you have practiced escape routes, your memory and instinct will help you move in the right direction and in the right way. Check all the windows from

which escape is planned. Can you open the window, or is it painted or nailed shut? Make sure your exits allow you to exit!

SMOKING

1. Whether or not you smoke, friends and relatives who visit your home may. It is important, in either case, to be careful with all smoking materials.
2. Don't leave cigarettes, cigars or pipes unattended. Put out all smoking materials before you walk away.
3. Don't put ashtrays on the arms of sofas or chairs. The ashtray can be tipped easily, spilling hot ashes or burning cigarettes onto the carpet or furniture.
4. Use large ashtrays with wide lips. While smaller ashtrays may be more attractive, they are not safe. Cigarettes can roll off the edge, and ashes can be easily blown around.
5. Close a match box (or book) before striking, and hold it away from your body. Set your cigarette light on "low" to prevent burns.
6. Empty all ashtrays into the toilet or metal container. Warm ashes dumped in waste cans can smolder for hours, then ignite surrounding trash. An option is to place the ashtray in the kitchen sink and fill it with water. Let it remain overnight before disposing.
7. NEVER, EVER smoke in bed. Make it a rule not to allow any smoking materials in bedrooms. Burning sheets, blankets and other bedclothes create a fire from which it is impossible to escape. Toxic fumes from the smoke can kill. Don't smoke in bed.
8. If you begin to feel drowsy while watching television or reading, extinguish your cigarette or cigar. Do it before it may be too late.
9. If friends or relatives who smoke have visited, be sure to check on the floor and around chair cushions for ashes that may have been dropped accidentally.

KITCHEN FIRES

- The kitchen is a high danger zone for fire, so be extra cautious with flame when cooking in the kitchen.
- If you must leave the kitchen while cooking, turn off the burner. If you have something in the oven, check it every 15 minutes. Most kitchen fires occur because food is left unattended on the stove or in the oven. A "brief" departure from the kitchen to attend to other matters can easily turn into an extended time away. As a reminder to you, take a potholder, a cooking spoon, or other kitchen utensil with you when you leave the room. This object will help you remember that you have an unfinished task waiting in the kitchen.
- Never cook with loose, dangling sleeves. Robes and other loose fitting garments can ignite easily. This is a major cause of serious burns for senior citizens. Don't take chances!



ELECTRIC

1. Regularly inspect your extension cords for fraying, exposed wires or loose plugs. They are not intended for use as permanent wiring. Unplug them when they are not in use.
2. If you need to plug in two or three appliances, lamps, etc., do not use a simple extension cord. It is better to get a UL approved unit that has built-in circuit breakers.



Remember:

- ☞ Never use an elevator during a fire!
- ☞ Never leave apartment doors open if you flee a fire!
- ☞ Dial 911 for emergency services.