

TVFD FIRE SAFETY FACTS

FACTS ABOUT SMOKE ALARMS

1. Protect yourself and your family Most fire deaths occur in homes where there are no working smoke alarms. Remember, only a working smoke alarm can save your life.
2. Smoke alarms save lives. Most fatal fires occur at night when people are asleep. Often, victims never wake up. A working smoke alarm will detect smoke and sound an alarm to alert you, giving you precious time to escape.
3. Buying the best alarm. There are many types of smoke alarms, each with different features. Alarms can be electrically connected, battery powered or a combination of both. The pause feature to reduce nuisance alarms is highly recommended.
4. One smoke alarm is not enough. Install smoke alarms on every level of your home and near sleeping areas. If you or your loved ones sleep with bedroom doors closed, install an alarm inside each bedroom.
5. Where to install smoke alarms. Because smoke rises you should place alarms on the ceiling. If you cannot do this, place them high up on a wall, according to manufacturers instructions. There are certain locations to avoid such as near bathrooms, heating appliances, windows, or close to ceiling fans.
6. Test your smoke alarm regularly. Every week, test your smoke alarm using the alarm test button. Once a month test your alarms using smoke from a smoldering cotton string. Follow your owner's manual.
7. Change your clock, change your battery. Install a new battery of the proper type at least once every year. If the low battery warning beeps, replace the battery immediately. We change our clocks each spring and fall so this is a good time to change your smoke alarm batteries too.
8. Gently vacuum alarm every six months. Dust can clog a smoke alarm, so carefully vacuum the inside of a battery powered unit using the soft bristle brush. If electrically connected, shut off the power and vacuum the outside vents only. Restore power and test the unit when finished.
9. Smoke alarms don't last forever. Smoke alarms do wear out, so if you think your alarms are more than 10 years old, replace them with new ones.
10. Plan your escape. Make sure that everyone knows the sound of the smoke alarm and what to do if a fire occurs. Regularly practice your home fire escape plan. Know two ways out of every room and have a pre-arranged meeting place outside. Once out, stay out and call the fire department from a neighbor's home.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Portable extinguishers are classified according to their capacity for handling specific types of fires. Fire extinguishers must be readily accessible, properly maintained, regularly inspected and promptly refilled after use.

Class "A" Extinguishers

For fires in ordinary combustible materials such as wood, paper and textiles where a quenching, cooling effect is required.

Class "B" Extinguishers

For flammable liquid and gas fires, such as oil, gasoline, paint and grease where oxygen exclusion or flame interruption is essential.

Class "C" Extinguishers

For fires involving electrical wiring and equipment where the non-conductivity of the extinguishing agent is essential. This type of extinguisher should be present wherever functional testing and system energizing takes place.

AFTER A FIRE

First Things

The first thing to do after a fire is to protect yourself from additional losses, under some insurance policies, there is an obligation by the insured to prevent further damage to the property in whatever way is reasonably possible. However, before attempting any cleaning or repairs, notify your insurance agent for confirmation on how and when to proceed.

When the Fire Department Personnel leave, the structure becomes your responsibility. Remove all valuables if you cannot live in the house. If a Firefighter or Fire Investigator is on the scene, they will accompany you. If possible, record his/her name for your insurance company. You are responsible for securing doors and windows and other areas against unauthorized entry.

If you are renting the property, contact the owner. If you own the property, contact your insurance company or agent as soon as possible. Your insurance agent will know what parts of the damage are insured. In some cases they may be able to assist by providing names of reputable contractors who can do restoration to certain parts that are not insured.

If you are a renter with no insurance, your possessions may not be covered.

Utilities: During the course of firefighting operations, it may have been necessary to disconnected or shut off utility services as a safety precaution or to prevent further damage to the structure and its contents. The procedure for re-establishing utility services are as follows:

Water: Once you have checked the pipes for leaks, cracks or other damage, and have had the required repairs completed, you may contact to re-connect your water supply.

Electricity: An Electrical Inspector must check the wiring before the power can be re-connected. Do not try to do it yourself, remember, do not operate wet or damp appliances. Electricity and water do not mix.

Telephone: Contact Aliant for information or repairs.

Damaged Freezers:

What to do when home freezers stop? Some things to remember about frozen foods:

1. A full freezer will stay colder than a freezer only one-quarter full.
2. A freezer full of meat will not warm up as fast as a freezer full of baked goods.
3. A well insulated freezer will keep food frozen longer than one with little insulation.
4. 25 lbs. of dry ice placed in a freezer soon after the power is shut off should keep food frozen for 2 to 3 days in a 10 cu. ft. cabinet with half a load and 3 to 4 days in a full cabinet.

When discarding any refrigerator or freezer, make sure the door(s) are removed or secured to ensure that a young child does not get accidentally trapped in it.

Cleaning Tips:

MATTRESSES

Your mattress may be able to be repaired by a mattress repair service. If you must use your mattress temporarily, sun dry the mattress on both sides and cover with plastic sheeting. It is almost impossible to get odor out of pillows. Feather and foam retain odor.

CARPETS AND RUGS

Carpets and Rugs - Let rugs and carpets dry out thoroughly. Clean with a wet/dry vacuum or water extractor carpet cleaning machine which can be rented at major supermarkets or other stores. They will remove the standing water and dirt. Add carpet cleaning detergent and clean the carpet as instructed on the machine. Rinse by using vinegar and water in the tank of the machine. Dry the rugs as quickly as possible. A fan turned on the rug will speed the drying. Any moisture remaining at the base will quickly rot the rug, causing it to fall apart. Contact carpet cleaners in the Yellow Pages.

CLOTHING WITH SMOKE DAMAGE

Clothing that can withstand bleaching, often can be cleaned by washing in one of the following mixtures:

1. Add 4-7 Tbsp. of trisodium phosphate and one cup Lysol to one gallon of water. Wash. Rinse with water and let dry.
2. 1/2 cup of ammonia to two gallons of water. Rinse in vinegar. (use rubber gloves)

Should you have doubts or questions about the cleaning or preparation of clothing, it is wise to contact a dry cleaning service in your Yellow Pages.

DISHES, POTS AND PANS

Most dishes can be washed in one tablespoon bleach to one gallon of lukewarm water for 30 minutes prior to washing. Wash in hot soapy water. Dishwashers are excellent for this purpose.

LINOLEUM FLOORS

When water is underneath linoleum it can cause odor and rot or warp the wood floor. If this happens, remove the entire sheet. If glued, a heat lamp will soften it so you can roll it up without breaking it.

WALLS AND WALLPAPER

Walls may be washed down while still wet. Use a mild soap and rubber gloves. Work from the floor up, a small area at a time. Rinse with clear water. Wash ceilings last. DO NOT PAINT UNTIL DRY.

Wallpaper - (washable)

1. Heat and ventilate room for several days to dry plaster and paper.

2. If mildewed, wipe with cloth wrung with soap.
3. Re-paste edges or loosened sections.
4. Work quickly when washing wallpaper so paper does not become soaked.

FOOD - IF IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT

Partial thawing and refreezing will reduce the quality of foods, particularly in fruits, vegetables and prepared foods. It is a safe practice to refreeze food partially thawed only if the food still contains visible crystals.

MEATS

These products are unsafe to eat when they begin to spoil. If the color or odor is questionable, throw it out. Bacteria can multiply rapidly in thawed or non-refrigerated foods that are designed for refrigeration.

FRUIT

Fruits usually ferment as they begin to spoil. They will absorb smoke or other by-products of fire, leaving the fruit discolored and bitter. It is a wise decision to dispose of this food.

ICE CREAM

Do not eat after melting

CANNED FOOD

Canned food in jars - If the product was subject to heat, it may not be sealed, throw it out! Food in tins - Don't use any canned foods where the can has bulged, is badly dented or rusted. To disinfect the exterior of a can or jar, wash in a solution of 3 Tbsp. of bleach to 1 gallon of water.

MEDICINE

Discard any medicine if contamination is suspected. Ointments and creams can absorb contaminants too.

COSMETICS

Creams, powders and lotions should be discarded if in doubt. Remember, IF IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!

COMMON QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Q. Why are windows broken or holes cut in the roof?

A. As a fire burns, it moves upward and outward. Breaking windows and/or cutting holes in the roof (called ventilation) stops that damaging outward movement and enables firefighters to fight the fire more effectively, resulting in less damage to the structure.

Q. Why are holes cut in the walls, floors and ceilings?

A. This is done so the Fire Department is absolutely sure the fire is completely out, and that no fire exists inside the walls or hidden places. Re-ignition can occur if the fire is not completely extinguished. Damage may appear unnecessary, however without the use of these fire fighting techniques, the building could suffer total destruction by fire.