



 Morinville

## FIRE SAFETY AT HOME



# **FIRE SAFETY AT HOME**

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Fire Safety begins at home with education, awareness and preparation. Most people believe an unfortunate fire event will not happen in their home. To minimize your family's risk of fire or fire-related injury or death the Town of Morinville would like to give you some information to help keep everyone safe and secure.

Did you know that if a fire starts in your home you may have as little as two minutes to escape? An average size home may become fully involved within 5 minutes! During a fire, early warning from a working smoke alarm plus a fire escape plan that has been practiced regularly can save lives! It is our hope that we can help to mitigate any possibilities of having an unwanted fire or possible injuries by following some of the guidelines for Fire Safety and Safety at Home.

Being prepared is your best defence against fire in your home. The Town of Morinville advises the following measures to keep you and your family safe and to reduce your risk of having an unwanted fire event or emergency.

If a fire occurs in your home, GET OUT, STAY OUT & CALL FOR HELP! Never go back inside for anything or anyone.

The sooner you call 911 for help, the sooner help will arrive. Calling too late can result in a fire event that is too hard to control or extinguish.

## Escape Planning

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- Pull together everyone in your household and make a plan. Walk through your home and inspect all possible exits and escape routes. Households with children should consider drawing a floor plan of your home, marking two ways out of each room, including windows and doors. Also, mark the location of each smoke alarm.
- A closed door may slow the spread of smoke, heat and fire. Install smoke alarms in every room where people sleep, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. NFPA 72, National Fire Alarm Code® requires interconnected smoke alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.
- When you walk through your plan, check to make sure the escape routes are clear, and doors and windows can be opened easily.
- Choose an outside meeting place (i.e. neighbour's house, a light post, mailbox, or stop sign) a safe distance in front of your home where everyone can meet after they've escaped. Make sure to mark the location of the meeting place on your escape plan.
- Go outside to see if your street number is clearly visible from the road. If not, paint it on the curb or install house numbers to ensure that responding emergency personnel can find your home.
- Have everyone in your house memorize 9-1-1 in the event that the fire department needs to be called. Any member of the household should be able to call from a neighbor's home or a cellular phone once safely outside.
- If there are infants, older adults, or family members with mobility limitations, make sure that someone is assigned to assist them in the fire drill and in the event of an emergency. Assign a backup person too, in case the assignee is not home during the emergency
- If windows or doors in your home have security bars, make sure that the bars have emergency release devices inside so that they can be opened immediately in an emergency. Emergency release devices won't compromise your security - but they will increase your chances of safely escaping a home fire.
- Tell guests or visitors to your home about your family's fire escape plan. When staying overnight at other people's homes, ask about their escape plan. If they don't have a plan in place, offer to help them make one. This is especially important when children are permitted to attend "sleepovers" at friends' homes.
- Be fully prepared for a real fire: when a smoke alarm sounds, get out immediately. Residents of high-rise and apartment buildings (PDF) may be safer "defending in place."
- Once you're out, stay out! Under no circumstances should you ever go back into a burning building. If someone is missing, inform the fire department dispatcher when you call. Firefighters have the skills and equipment to perform rescues.

## Testing Your Escape Plan

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- Practice your home fire escape plan twice a year, making the drill as realistic as possible.
- Make arrangements in your plan for anyone in your home who has a disability.
- Allow children to master fire escape planning and practice before holding a fire drill at night when they are sleeping. The objective is to practice, not to frighten, so telling children there will be a drill before they go to bed can be as effective as a surprise drill.
- It's important to determine during the drill whether children and others can readily waken to the sound of the smoke alarm. If they fail to awaken, make sure that someone is assigned to wake them up as part of the drill and in a real emergency situation.
- If your home has two floors, every family member (including children) must be able to escape from the second floor rooms. Escape ladders can be placed in or near windows to provide an additional escape route. Review the manufacturer's instructions carefully so you'll be able to use a safety ladder in an emergency. Practice setting up the ladder from a first floor window to make sure you can do it correctly and quickly. Children should only practice with a grown-up, and only from a first-story window. Store the ladder near the window, in an easily accessible location. You don't want to have to search for it during a fire.
- Always choose the escape route that is safest:
  - a. Choose the route with the least amount of smoke and heat.
  - b. Everyone must be prepared to escape under toxic smoke if necessary (when you do your fire drill, everyone in the family should practice getting low and going under the smoke to your exit).
- Closing doors on your way out slows the spread of fire, giving you more time to safely escape.
- In some cases, smoke or fire may prevent you from exiting your home or apartment building. To prepare for an emergency like this, practice "sealing yourself in for safety" as part of your home fire escape plan. Close all doors between you and the fire. Use duct tape or towels to seal the door cracks and cover air vents to keep smoke from coming in. If possible, open your windows at the top and bottom so fresh air can get in. Call the fire department to report your exact location. Wave a flashlight or light-colored cloth at the window to let the fire department know where you are located.

## Clearing Your Escape Routes

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Items that block doors and windows in your home could keep you from escaping in the event of a home fire, and that could mean the difference between life and death. Make sure to unblock your exits today! Key to your family's safety is planning and practicing a home fire escape plan twice a year. Start by identifying two escape routes out of each room, if possible, then make sure that each of those escape routes can be used safely by everyone.

More information on Escape Planning can be found at the following websites: <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Staying-safe/Preparedness/Escape-planning>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/disability/arc/planning-safety.html>

<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Alberta/Pages/Fire-using-a-window-as-an-escape-route.aspx>

## Smoke Alarms

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You have probably heard the phrase “Smoke alarms save lives.” It is very true. You can minimize your family’s risk of fire-related injury or death by installing the right number of smoke alarms in the right places in your home, and by keeping them all in good working order. You should also test them regularly to make sure they work properly. By law, smoke alarms sold in Canada must comply with the Underwriters Laboratories of Canada (ULC) Standard for Smoke Alarms, CAN/ULC-S531.

Under Alberta Law, all dwelling units (including rental units) must have smoke alarms. The Fire Code and Building Code have different codes for different types of buildings. Contact the Morinville Fire Department or Morinville Planning and Economic Development if you have any questions about fire or building codes or how to install the alarm. A dwelling is any type of housing. Occupancies include; apartment buildings, dormitories, hotels and motels, lodging houses, mobile homes and rooming houses.

- Smoke detectors must be installed in every room where people sleep, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home, including the basement.
- Read and follow every step of the manufacturer’s directions when you install your smoke alarms.

- Test your smoke alarms every month to make sure they are working properly.
- Follow the manufacturer’s directions for cleaning and maintenance of your smoke alarms.
- Change the batteries as often as recommended by the manufacturer.
- Replace any smoke alarm that is more than 10 years old.
- Investigate any false alarms, do you have an escape plan in case of a fire.

More information on Smoke Alarms can be found at the following websites:

<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/alberta/Pages/Smoke-alarms-and-home-safety.aspx>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/home-safety/fire-safety.html#a1>

## Carbon Monoxide (CO) Detectors / Alarms

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It is also recommended that all homes have a Carbon Monoxide (CO) Detector. Carbon Monoxide can be produced in your home by heating and cooking appliances as well as exhaust fumes from internal combustion engines. Carbon Monoxide is a clear odourless gas that can cause serious illness or death. Carbon monoxide can cause health problems before you even notice that it’s present. Breathing it in reduces your body’s ability to carry oxygen in your blood. Exposure to the gas can cause carbon monoxide poisoning (CO poisoning) and can be dangerous to your health.

- Carbon monoxide detectors should be installed outside each bedroom and sleeping area, and on each level of your home, including the basement.
- Read and follow every step of the manufacturer’s directions when you install your carbon monoxide alarms.
- Test your carbon monoxide alarms every month to make sure they are working properly.

- Follow the manufacturer’s directions for cleaning and maintenance of your carbon monoxide alarms.
- Change the batteries as often as recommended by the manufacturer.
- Replace any carbon monoxide alarm that is more than 10 years old.

Investigate any alarms, evacuate the building and call 911 when any carbon monoxide alarm sounds.

More information on carbon monoxide and carbon monoxide Alarms can be found at the following websites:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/air-quality/indoor-air-contaminants/keep-carbon-monoxide-out-your-home.html>

<https://www.altagasutilities.com/carbon-monoxide>

## Fire Extinguishers

Purchase a fire extinguisher for your home and keep it handy in the event of a small fire. Make sure you know what to look for when buying a fire extinguisher for your home.

- Always check for certification marks and identification, such as a designation or approval from the Underwriters Lab of Canada.
- Fire extinguishers indicate the type of fire that they are designed to extinguish with a letter (A, B, C, D, & K) and the size of fire that they can extinguish with a number. The higher the number rating on the fire extinguisher, the more it puts out.
- It is important to make sure you can comfortably hold and operate the fire extinguisher you buy.
- If you have a rechargeable fire extinguisher, have it serviced and inspected according to the manufacturer's instructions, recharge it after use.
- Check your fire extinguisher monthly to assure it has enough pressure and is in proper working order.
- Install your extinguisher near an escape route and away from potential fire hazards. Assure that if you use the extinguisher that your exit route is not blocked by smoke or fire (make sure your fire extinguisher is always accessible and readily available).

### Fire Extinguisher Safety tips

Use a portable fire extinguisher when the fire is confined to a small area, such as a wastebasket, and is not growing; everyone has exited the building; the fire department has been called or is being called; and the room is not filled with smoke.

To operate a fire extinguisher, remember the word **PASS**:

**Pull** the pin. Hold the extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from you and release the locking mechanism.

**Aim** low. Point the extinguisher at the base of the fire.

**Squeeze** the lever slowly and evenly.

**Sweep** the nozzle from side-to-side.

For the home, select a multi-purpose extinguisher (can be used on all types of home fires) that is large enough to put out a small fire, but not so heavy as to be difficult to handle.

Choose a fire extinguisher that carries the label of an independent testing laboratory.

Read the instructions that come with the fire extinguisher and become familiar with its parts and operation before a fire breaks out. Local fire departments or fire equipment distributors often offer hands-on fire extinguisher trainings.

Install fire extinguishers close to an exit and keep your back to a clear exit when you use the device so you can make an easy escape if the fire cannot be controlled. If the room fills with smoke, leave immediately.

Know when to go. Fire extinguishers are one element of a fire response plan, but the primary element is safe escape. Every household should have a home fire escape plan and working smoke alarms.

More information on fire extinguishers can be found below and at the following website:

<https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Staying-safe/Safety-equipment/Fire-extinguishers>

### CLASSES OF FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

The four classes of fire are: A, B, C and D. Choosing the right classification for the type of fire is extremely important.

**Class A: Ordinary Combustibles** use on wood, paper, plastic, rubber or cloth.



**Class B: Flammable Combustible Liquids** use on gasoline, oil, grease, tar, lacquer, oil-based paints and other flammable gases.



**Class C: Electrical Equipment** use on energized electrical equipment such as wiring, fuse boxes, breakers, machinery and appliances.



**Class D: Combustible Metals** use on industrial metal such as magnesium, titanium, zirconium, sodium, potassium or other flammable metals.



### REMEMBER!

**P**ull  
**A**im  
**S**queeze  
**S**weep



### EXTINGUISHING OPERATION

When a small fire breaks out, have someone else call 9-1-1 immediately! To use the portable fire extinguisher effectively, remember these four steps:

**P= Pull** the pin. Be sure the extinguisher has the nozzle pointing away from you.

**A= Aim** the extinguisher nozzle (or hose) at the base (bottom) of the fire. Hold the extinguisher vertically, never horizontally. Stand about 6-10 feet away from the fire.

**S= Squeeze** the handle fully to release the extinguishing agent through the nozzle. Releasing the lever will stop the discharge.

**S= Sweep** the nozzle from side to side aiming at the base of the fire. If you run out of chemical before the fire is out, either leave immediately or have a second extinguisher within arms reach.

## Electrical Products

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Household electrical products can pose health or safety risks, including fire, if used incorrectly.

- Check all manufactures recommendations for all electrical appliances. Only use them for their intended purpose and with the proper rated cords and outlets.
- Electrical products should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. Extension cords are a temporary means of providing power and should be unplugged after the use of any electrical products.
- Power bars and power distribution should not be overloaded or daisy chained. Ensure the power distribution devices are ULC rated and have the proper circuit/overload protection.
- If your electrical product is not in use it should be unplugged or de-energized.

- Ensure all cords are free of cuts, breaks, abrasions, cracks or any damage that could potentially cause a short circuit, sparks, heat or electrical shock.
- Electrical heating appliances must be clear of all combustible material and have the proper rated outlets and cords. (Temporary heating must be monitored regularly, and the surrounding areas checked for signs of potential heat conduction, convection, or radiant heat that may ignite flammable objects within its proximity.)
- **Do not overload any circuit.**

More information on electrical product safety can be found at the following website:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/home-safety/electrical-products.html>

## Smoking and Smoking Materials

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All homeowners must know smoking and smoking products are one of the leading causes of house fires. Smokers should regularly check their furniture and bed for fallen cigarettes or embers, which can smolder for hours before bursting into flames. Make sure to properly extinguish cigarettes and never leave lit cigarettes unattended.

Plants and plant pots are never to be used as ashtrays as peat moss and organics will smolder and burn for long periods of time and once a wind comes up it will ignite and catch the whole plant on fire. Butts should be fully extinguished and placed in a non-combustible container with sand or water and deep enough that they cannot be blown out. Containers should be placed outside and far away from anything combustible.

Please be respectful and responsible when disposing of your smoking materials! Do not throw your butts out of your car window when traveling or off your balcony when finished. The Town of Morinville and Sturgeon County go to many fires on the side of roadways, highways, parks and yards started by smokers throwing out cigarette butts from their cars or out of their home or apartment windows and doors.

Every day millions of cigarette butts end up in nature – they get thrown on the ground, on pavements, in to storm drains, flushed and even directly into the lakes, rivers and streams. Cigarette butts are the most common litter item in the world. Globally 4.5 billion cigarette butts end up in nature every single year. This means millions of butts every single day. These items clog and cause multiple problems for our Town of Morinville municipal water and the Capital Region water drainage system. These items do not biodegrade.

Cigarette butts are made of cellulose acetate and contain several toxins, such as cadmium, lead and arsenic, and in water they break down to microplastics and release toxins in the surrounding waters. When a cigarette butt enters a water environment it starts leaking these substances within hours. Research has shown that the consequences of these toxins in water bodies are deadly for the fish and other marine life.

### Lighters and Matches

Children who have access to lighters and matches risk causing fires that could lead to injuries and death. You can do the following to reduce the risk to you and your family.

- Keep lighters and matches out of the sight and reach of children at all times.
- Teach children about the dangers of lighters and matches.
- Check under beds and in closets for burnt matches. (Burnt matches may be evidence that your child is playing with fire.)
- Keep in mind that:
  - Not all lighters are child-resistant.
  - Child-resistant does not mean child-proof.
  - Lighters that look like toys are appealing to children.

### Candles

Candles can be a serious fire hazard if not used properly. There are a number of things you can do to reduce health and safety risks when you burn candles. Remember when you GO OUT, BLOW OUT!

## Smoking and Smoking Materials Continued

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- Extinguish all candles before going to bed or leaving the room. Never leave burning candles unattended.
- Do not burn candles on or near anything that can catch fire (like curtains, bedding, combustible decorations, and clothing.)
- Keep candles out of reach of children and pets. Place burning candles somewhere they cannot be knocked over.
- Keep the wicks of candles short to prevent high flames.

- Use only sturdy candle holders that will not easily tip over.
- We recommend to use battery operated (LED) candles in place of real candles as a safe alternative.

More information on Candle Safety can be found at the following website:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/healthy-living/your-health/products/candle-safety.html>

## Fireplace Safety

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Many homeowners, restaurants, and hotels have fireplaces. While they can provide warmth and a comforting glow, they also have risks. Make sure all gas fireplaces are properly vented and no leaks of natural gas, carbon monoxide or any byproducts of combustion are present. Keeping your child safe around a fireplace is important. One of the best ways to do this is to teach your child about the dangers of fire and the heat it creates. Only burn clean dry wood with low creosote levels indoors.

- Wherever a fireplace is present you must mitigate any chances of anyone touching any hot parts of the fireplace while it is in use and until it is totally cooled off.
- Barriers must be in place to prevent children from any contact with the fireplace while it is hot.
- Keep spark arresters, screens and glass doors closed at all times when a fireplace is in use to reduce or eliminate sparks from igniting anything combustible.
- Ensure proper ventilation, keep dampeners open and have a fresh source of air or ventilation.

- Keep you chimney and all ductwork and venting clean and check for build up of any combustible byproducts from building up.
- Check for breaches in chimneys, fire boxes, venting or ducting as well as any gas fittings and attached appliances. (Have a professional do a thorough inspection and cleaning of all chimneys, wood and gas fireplaces yearly.)
- Keep a fire extinguisher close by just in case.
- Keep all wood for the fire not being used a safe distance from the fireplace and in small quantities as not to add fuel loads to the dwelling. (Do not fill any portion of your home with firewood. Keep it outside or in a shed or outbuilding. Only bring into the dwelling what is required for your day's burning use.)

More information on Fireplace Safety can be found at the following websites:

<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Alberta/Pages/gas-fireplace-safety.aspx>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/air-quality/indoor-air-contaminants/avoid-wood-smoke.html>



## Cooking Safety at Home

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Cooking fires are the number one cause of home fires and home injuries. The leading cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking.

### What you should know about home cooking safety:

- Be on alert! If you are sleepy or have consumed alcohol, don't use the stove or stovetop.
- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling, boiling, or broiling food.
- If you are simmering, baking, or roasting food, check it regularly, remain in the kitchen while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
- Keep anything that can catch fire — oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels or curtains — away from your stovetop.

### If you have a cooking fire:

- Just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire.
- Call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number after you leave.
- If you try to fight the fire, be sure others are getting out and you have a clear way out.
- Keep a lid nearby when you're cooking to smother small grease fires. Smother the fire by sliding the lid over the pan and turn off the stovetop. Leave the pan covered until it is completely cooled.
- For an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed.

### Safety considerations for cooking with oil:

- Always stay in the kitchen when frying on the stovetop.
- Keep an eye on what you fry. If you see wisps of smoke or the oil smells, immediately turn off the burner and/or carefully remove the pan from the burner. Smoke is a danger sign that the oil is too hot.
- Heat the oil slowly to the temperature you need for frying or sautéing.
- Add food gently to the pot or pan so the oil does not splatter.
- Always cook with a lid beside your pan. If you have a fire, slide the lid over the pan and turn off the burner. Do not remove the cover because the fire could start again. Let the pan cool for a long time. Never throw water on the fire.

- If the fire does not go out or you don't feel comfortable sliding a lid over the pan, get everyone out of your home. Call the fire department from outside.

### Cooking fire facts based on 2014-2018 annual averages:

- Cooking equipment is the leading cause of home fires and fire injuries, causing 49% of home fires that resulted in 21% of the home fire deaths and 44% of the injuries.
- Two-thirds (66%) of home cooking fires start with the ignition of food or other cooking materials.
- Clothing is the item first ignited in less than 1% of these fires, but clothing ignitions lead to 8% of the home cooking equipment fire deaths.
- Ranges or cooktops account for three-fifths (61%) of home cooking fire incidents.
- Unattended equipment is a factor in one-third (31%) of reported home cooking fires and over half (53%) of the associated deaths.
- Frying dominates the cooking fire problem.
- Thanksgiving is the peak day for home cooking fires, followed by Christmas Day, the day before Thanksgiving, Easter, and Christmas Eve.

More information on cooking safety can be found at the following websites and links:

[https://www.nfpa.org/-/media/Files/Public-Education/Resources/Community-tool-kits/cooking-kit/cooking\\_safety\\_checklist.ashx](https://www.nfpa.org/-/media/Files/Public-Education/Resources/Community-tool-kits/cooking-kit/cooking_safety_checklist.ashx)

<https://www.nfpa.org/-/media/Files/Public-Education/Resources/Safety-tip-sheets/CookingSafety.ashx?as=1&iar=1&hash=18EEE1B2ED403B44B229EA856EDE289F>

[https://www.nfpa.org/~/\\_media/files/public-education/resources/handouts-in-other-languages/low-literacy-pieces/translation\\_english\\_cooking.pdf?la=en](https://www.nfpa.org/~/_media/files/public-education/resources/handouts-in-other-languages/low-literacy-pieces/translation_english_cooking.pdf?la=en)

<https://www.nfpa.org/-/media/Files/Public-Education/Resources/Community-tool-kits/cooking-kit/usfacookinginstructorsguide.ashx>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/general-food-safety-tips/cooking-safety.html>

## Flammable Liquids and Chemicals Storage

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Flammable liquids and chemical storage at home should be kept to small quantities and in approved containers. Having these items stored inside your home can pose a high risk of possible fire or explosion when not stored or handled in a safe manner.

If chemicals must be stored in the home for a short term, it's critical to store them safely and properly until they can be deposited at a designated depot. Safe storage methods may differ, but instructions are typically provided on the product label or directions enclosed with the packaging.

Look for symbols on the label that indicate flammable, corrosive or toxic hazards. If in doubt, contact the retailer and request a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). The MSDS provides key information and safety recommendations related to the product.

- Store flammable liquids preferably outside in a metal cabinet or in an unheated area. Never store near an open flame or spark. Flammable liquids include gasoline, camp stove fuel, paint thinner and lamp oil.
- Store corrosive materials in a place such as a plastic tub or tray where the product can't spill out if the container leaks. Examples of corrosive materials include drain cleaners, bleach and acids.
- Store out of the reach of children and pets. Household chemicals should never be accessible to those who are not aware of their proper use or application.
- Any rags, paper towel, paper, or temporary containers used when handling and cleaning up after using flammables or

chemicals should never be thrown directly in the household trash. Some items after a period of time they may spontaneously combust when exposed to air or other chemicals. Put these items into a non-flammable container such as a steel galvanized garbage can with a lid and keep them outside away from buildings, structures or any trees or combustibles. Only dispose of them inside a sealed garbage plastic bag on waste collection day in your regular waste collection bin. (Remember to keep at least 3 Meters from anything when setting out your bin in case of a resulting fire.)

- Never throw any flammable liquids or chemicals or their containers into the regular household garbage.
- In some cases, a label may recommend not storing one product with another. Take care to separate the products into different storage areas.

### Transporting Household Chemicals and Flammables

When transporting unwanted household chemicals to a designated fire station or disposal site, remember to make sure all materials are well marked and if possible, in their original containers with secure lids.

Use a plastic tub or tray to hold the containers rather than a cardboard box. This will help prevent contamination of the vehicle or the roadway if the material spills or leaks.

Ensure adequate ventilation is provided when transporting household chemicals inside a vehicle. Enclose the product(s) in a plastic bag to prevent exposure to vapours or fumes.

## Holiday Safety Tips

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Holidays can be busy and joyous times, but holiday decorations and new toys can bring risks along with festive cheer. Stay safe by knowing how to manage the health or safety hazards of holiday items you bring into your home.

### Holiday trees

- When buying a real tree, make sure it's fresh (you can tell if the needles are hard to pull off). Water the tree daily once you bring it indoors for decorating.
- Place the tree away from high traffic areas and doorways. Make sure the tree is well-secured in a sturdy stand.
- Place the tree away from heating vents, radiators, stoves, fireplaces and burning candles.
- Keep metal, sharp or breakable tree ornaments with small removable parts away from young children.
- Dispose of the tree as soon as the holidays are over, or as soon as the needles start to fall. Dispose of it according to local regulations--most municipalities have tree recycling programs.

### Holiday lights and decorations

- Use lights that have the mark of an accredited certification agency such as CSA, cUL or cETL. Check the Healthy Canadians Recalls and Safety Alerts Database before buying or using lights to find out about the latest recalls.
- Choose the right light for the job: light strings and other decorations are rated for indoor or outdoor use. Ensure that indoor lights and decorations are only used inside. Read the package instructions and do not exceed the recommended wattage.
- Check all light bulbs before you put them up. Replace broken or burned-out bulbs with those recommended by the manufacturer.
- Check the light strings and extension cords you use, discarding any that are frayed or have exposed wires, loose connections or broken light sockets.
- Never run electrical cords and extension cords through or across doorways where they may be pinched or trip someone, or under carpets where they can be damaged or overheat.
- Avoid plugging too many lights and decorations into an outlet. Overloaded circuits can overheat and start a fire.

- Use Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI) outlets when plugging in outdoors.
- Turn off all holiday lights before you go to bed or leave your home.
- Keep 'bubble lights' away from children -- they contain a hazardous chemical that may cause irritation or burns if the bulb breaks.
- Choose tinsel, artificial icicles and other trimmings made of plastic or non-lead metals. Don't let children put decorations in their mouths, as some may be harmful to their health. **Toys and gifts**
- New toys and gifts are holiday highlights for many children. Minimize potential hazards from new gifts by buying sturdy, well-made toys that are appropriate for your child's age. Toys for older children may contain small parts or other hazards that may make them unsafe for young children.
- Toys can be recalled for health or safety reasons. Check the Healthy Canadians Recalls and Safety Alerts Database for more information about the latest recalls.

### Toy safety tips

- Read and follow the age labels, warnings, safety messages and other instructions that come with a toy. Check for contact information of the manufacturer or importer if you have any concerns.
- Dispose immediately all toy packaging like plastic bags, plastic wrap, foam, staples, ties and protective film. A child can suffocate or choke on these items.
- Ensure batteries are not accessible to children and are properly installed by an adult.
- Supervise children at play and teach them to use their new toys safely.

More information on toys and play time safety can be found at the following websites and links:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/home-safety/tips-holiday-safety.html>