

About This Checklist

This checklist is based on real life fires that have occurred in Lincoln County, Missouri. It also reflects the most frequent fire causes and contributing factors found where significant property loss, injuries or death has occurred...



Common Fire Causes & Factors

- Failure to maintain appliances (furnace, dryer, waterheater, fireplaces)
- Careless smoking***
- Child fire play***
- Unattended or careless cooking
- Improper use of space heaters
- Candles or open flames
- Holiday decorations (electrical)
- Outdoor burning (spread to home)
- Electrical circuit overload
- Improper discard of fireplace ashes
- No smoke alarms or not working***

*** One or more fatalities or injuries have occurred.

Daily Checklist

- Clean oven and stove top after each use. Grease build up or combustibles too close cause fires.
- Clean woodburning fireplaces after each use. Discard ashes in metal container with tight fitting lid. Place outside on concrete or gravel, away from buildings.
- Ensure space heaters are kept at least 3 feet away from all combustible materials. Don't leave them unattended and turn them off before bed.
- Don't overload electrical circuits. Tripping breakers usually indicate overload.
- Keep your home clean and organized. Clutter and overloading increases fire speed.
- Properly extinguish and discard smoking materials using water.
- Candles should only be used when immediately attended. Make sure they can't tip or fall.
- Keep combustibles away from all appliances. Don't store things on top of appliances.
- Never leave the stove or oven on while unattended. If you must leave the room, turn it off.

Monthly Checklist

- Replace furnace filter and vacuum dust from inside and other accessible areas of furnace.
- Vacuum dust from outside of smoke detectors.
- Test each smoke detector using the "test" button. Immediately replace detectors that do not function properly.
- Test each carbon monoxide detector. These are necessary if you have gas appliances.
- Disassemble dryer vent to exterior and clean lint from inside. Lint buildup can cause a fire.
- Practice your fire escape plan with your family. Everyone must have two ways out.

Other Important Items

- Daylight Savings Time: Replace smoke detector batteries with brand new ones.
- Annually: Have wood burning fireplaces and flues professionally cleaned and inspected.
- 10 years: Replace all smoke detectors with new ones. Residential smoke alarm are only good for 10 years.