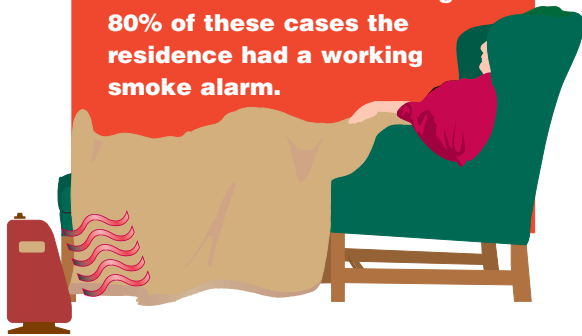


# Fire Safety TIPS for Older Adults

The two leading causes of fire deaths and injuries in older adults are smoking material and the misuse of portable space heaters.

Statistics show that people over the age of 80 are three times more likely to be injured in a fire.

Fire reports show that fatalities occur even though in 80% of these cases the residence had a working smoke alarm.



## Why are Older Adults at Risk?

Many seniors live alone. When they need help, there may not be anyone close by.

Some seniors have physical conditions or are on medication which affects their ability to make quick decisions or restricts their movements. Many seniors are not aware of what to do in case of fire.

### Tips to Remember !

- If you have to smoke, have a designated area, such as your kitchen table or in a smoking room.
- Never smoke in bed while reading, it is too easy to fall asleep. Newspapers and print material are highly flammable.
- Keep space heaters well-ventilated and at least three feet away from flammable material. If you feel cold, it is better to put on a sweater or cover yourself with a blanket.
- Extension cords are for temporary use only.
- Never run electrical cords under a carpet or rug, and avoid using an extension cord with a space heater or electric blanket.
- Do not use dish towels as pot holders. They will ignite easily if they come in contact with a hot burner.
- When you are cooking, remember to wear tight-fitting or sleeveless clothing. Burn injuries happen when clothing comes in contact with hot burners or catches on pot handles which

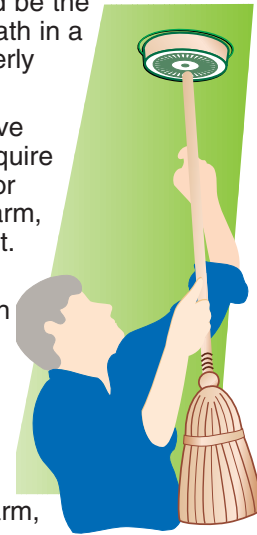


causes spills that scald.

- Sleep with your bedroom door closed. If fire occurs, this may give you time to escape.

## Smoke Alarms can Save your Life!

- A working smoke alarm could be the difference between life or death in a fire, but only if they are properly installed and maintained.
- Smoke alarms are inexpensive and easy to install. If you require assistance with the location or installation of your smoke alarm, call your local fire department.
- You should have a working smoke alarm on every floor in your home and outside your sleeping area. It is very important to test your smoke alarm while you are asleep; have a relative or a friend perform this test for you. If you can't hear the smoke alarm, it isn't much good to you!



## Maintaining your Smoke Alarm is Just as Important.

Contact your local fire department or have a friend or relative perform the following tasks:

- Once a month, test the battery by pushing the test button or directing smoke from a snuffed out candle into the alarm.
- Once a year, change the battery. You can always use the old battery in a nonessential tool, like your TV remote.
- To clean your smoke alarm, open the cover and gently vacuum the unit with the soft brush attachment.
- Replace your smoke alarm if it is more than 10 years old.

- Never disconnect your smoke alarm for any reason.

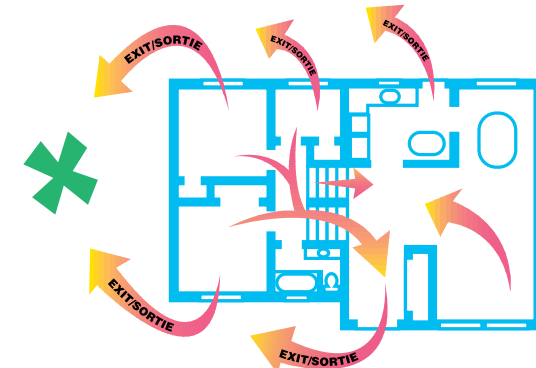
## Plan your Escape and Practise It.

- Should fire strike your house, a pre-determined and practised escape plan will reduce panic and confusion. Most of all, it could save your life.
- Know two ways out of every room. In a fire, one exit may be blocked by smoke or flames. Be sure to include all hallways and stairs in your escape plan.
- If you find yourself trapped, put as many closed doors as possible between you and the fire.
- Make sure to seal all cracks in doors and windows with towels or bedding, and contact the fire department by phone or signal from a window.
- Make sure you can unlock all doors and open all windows. Know how to escape safely from all levels of your home.

## In Case of Fire: Know When to Go: React Fast to Fire.

- **Get Out and Stay Out.**

If you are outside never go back into a burning building for anything. Let the fire department do any rescue work.



- **Get Down, Stay Low.**

Smoke and heat build up from the ceiling down, so crawl low near the floor as you go to the nearest exit, maintaining contact with the wall.

- **Test the Door.**

You can test the door by feeling it with the back of your hand. If the door or knob is hot, do not open it. Use your second way out. If the door and knob is cool, stay low, with your shoulder against the door, open it slowly. Be ready to close it if smoke and heat rushes in.



- **Stop, Drop, and Roll.**

If your clothing catches on fire, stop where you are. Drop gently to the ground. Cover your face with your hands and roll back and forth to put out the flames.

- **First-Aid for Burns.**

Run cool water over the burn area for 5 to 10 minutes. This will prevent further skin damage. See your doctor as soon as possible.