

## Fire Safety Checklist

These simple and easy steps will help you to identify and to correct fire and other electrical dangers commonly found in homes.

### 1. Check for the Presence and Proper Placement of Smoke Alarms and Test each one.

- Do you have smoke alarms? Sixty-five percent of home fire deaths result from fires in homes with no working smoke alarms. Smoke alarms should be located on every level of the home, inside each bedroom, and outside each sleeping area.
- Are they working? Test smoke alarms on a monthly basis. Replace all smoke alarms when they are more than 10 years old.
- Do you have a home escape plan? Know at least two ways out of every room, if possible. Practice your escape plan with your family. Make sure everyone in your home knows how to call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number.

### 2. Check the Wattage of all Bulbs in your Lights.

- Are the bulbs the appropriate wattage for the size of the fixtures? A bulb of too-high wattage may lead to fire through overheating.

### 3. Check all Lamp Cords and Extension Cords.

- Are cords in good condition (not damaged or cracked)? Shock or fire hazards can result from damaged cords. Do not attempt to repair cords yourself. Take any item with a damaged power cord to an authorized repair center, or safely dispose of the item and purchase a new one.
- Are cords unwrapped? Tightly wrapped cords can lead to overheating.
- Are all extension cords being used only on a temporary basis? Extension cords are not as safe as permanent house wiring. Have receptacles installed where they are needed.

### 4. Check all Wall Outlets and Switches

- Are all outlets and switches working properly? Improperly operating outlets or switches indicate that an unsafe wiring condition may exist.
- Are all outlets and switches cool to the touch? Unusually warm outlets or switches may indicate an unsafe wiring condition exists.
- Do you hear crackling, sizzling, or buzzing from your outlets? Call a licensed electrician to identify the cause.

### Bedroom

#### 5. Check Portable Heaters

- Is it placed away from things that can catch fire such as drapes and newspapers? Relocate heaters away from passageways and keep all flammable materials such as curtains, rugs, furniture or newspaper at least three feet away.
- Is the equipment stable and placed where it will not be tipped over? Fire hazard can result if a heater is tipped over. Animals and even blowing drapes can be factors.

## Kitchen

### 6. Check all Counter Top Appliances

- Are all appliance cords placed away from hot surfaces? Pay particular attention to cords around toasters, ovens, and ranges. Cords can be damaged by excess heat.
- Are all appliances located away from the sink? Electrical appliances can cause a shock if they come in contact with water. Plug kitchen appliances into GFCI protected outlets.

### 7. Check all Large Appliances

- Have you ever received even a slight shock (other than one from static electricity) from any of these appliances? Do not touch the appliance until it has been checked by an electrician.
- Is the top and area above the cooking range free of combustibles (for example, potholders, plastic utensils)? Using range for storage of non-cooking equipment may result in fires or burns.

## Bathroom

### 8. Check for Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs)

- Are the bathroom outlets protected by GFCIs? GFCIs should be installed in kitchens, bathrooms, and other areas where the risk of electric shock is high.
- If you have any GFCIs, do you test them regularly? GFCIs must be operating properly to protect against electrocution.

### 9. Check Small Electrical Products Such As Hair Dryers and Curling Irons

- Are they in good condition? Pay particular attention to erratic operation and damaged wiring or other parts.

## Basement/Garage

### 10. Check Your Breaker Box

- Is your fuse box or circuit breaker box appropriately labeled? Labeling helps to easily identify what circuits power each room in your home.
- Are you regularly resetting tripped circuit breakers? Circuit breakers that are constantly tripping indicate that the circuit is overloaded or that other electrical hazards exist. Consult a qualified, licensed electrician.
- Is your home protected by Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCIs)? AFCIs are devices that replace standard circuit breakers in the electrical service panel and that greatly reduce the risk of home electrical fires. If you are interested in having AFCI protection added to your home, consult a qualified, licensed electrician.