## Fire Protection For Home And Family

Fire destroys one residence every minute, 365 days a year. More importantly, about 7,000 people are killed annually in home fires. Death can be avoided and property damage minimized, says the Better Business Bureau, by having each family attempt to eliminate fire hazards, install alarm systems and prepare a fire escape plan.

The main sources of residential fire hazards are smoking and matches. They cause more than half of all fatal house fires. To cut the odds of such a fire. never smoke in bed and keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children.

The next most frequent causes of fire are heating equipment, cooking equipment and other electrical appliances. Heating equipment improperly installed or operated is a fire waiting to happen. Never push a heater, especially an old one, beyond its rated capacity. As an ounce of prevention, have the heating system checked once a year by a qualified expert. Do not use portable gas or oil heaters and keep portable electric units well away from curtains, bedding furniture and other combustibles.

## Don't Overload The Circuits

The increasing number of electrical appliances in today's homes can lead to inadequate or frayed wiring...which leads to fire. If fuses frequently blow, the eircuits are overloaded. Do not put in a larger capacity fuse; instead, have the wiring or circuit system extended by an electrician. Avoid multiple attachment plugs and long extension cords. They increase fire hazards.

Fires frequently start in the kitchen, because of negligence in use and upkeep of the stove. Keep the stove area free of grease and away from combustibles. Never leave an operating stove unattended.

To complement the attempts to eliminate hazards, invest in a good fire detection system. The fact is that the big killer in home fires is smoke. Choking. poisonous smoke blocks escapes and causes death far more often than the flames themselves. That's why the basis of any home alarm system should be smoke detectors. They should be installed outside each bedroom area and on each floor of a house.

For additional protection. consider adding a heat detector. It sounds an alarm to warn of abnormally high temperatures which can occur without sufficient smoke to set off the other device.

Most detectors can be installed by the homeowner, but to interconnect them so that all alarms go off together may require a professional electrician. In any event, beware of door-todoor salespersons who use scare tactics and gimmicks to get consumers to buy more than is needed and at inflated prices.

## Keep An Extinguisher Handy

The other item that homes should have is a fire and the statement and for many

discovered in the early stages. The entire family should learn how to use it and on what types of fires it is effective.



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