



LONG VIEW

Fire Department

2404 1st Ave SW Long View, NC 28602



GENERAL HOME FIRE SAFETY TIPS

While fires in the home are inevitable, many are preventable. Even when fires do occur, a little basic education and common sense can greatly reduce the damage. Again, preparation is the key. In this section, we will discuss some common scenarios and present solutions that will better prepare you if a fire does occur.

There are three elements to the "fire triangle." They are oxygen, fuel and heat. All three must be present to produce fire. Take any one of the elements away and the fire will go out. However, one must realize that all fires are not the same and it may be difficult or even dangerous to attempt to remove one or more of these elements.

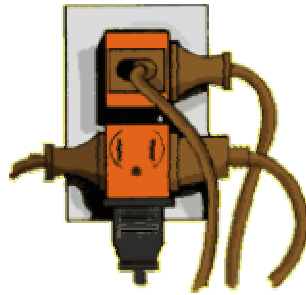
The most common area of origin in accidental residential fires is the kitchen. Again, as we think about the fire triangle, all rooms in your home have two of the elements; fuel and oxygen. The kitchen stands out because it also has the missing third element, heat. As mentioned in the last paragraph, extinguishing these fires can be dangerous if certain guidelines are not followed. One of the most basic rules to observe in dealing with kitchen fires is remembering not to use water, especially if the fire is confined to the stove top or to a pot or pan. If the fire is small and confined to a pot or pan, extinguishment can often be accomplished simply by covering it with a lid. Use this method only if you feel it is safe. If you feel the fire is too large for this method, your next alternative will be to use an ABC fire extinguisher. We recommend that you keep at least a 2.5 pound extinguisher in your kitchen and make sure it remains in a readily accessible location. The letters, ABC, indicate the type of fire(s) for which the extinguishing agent is designed. The 'A' means it will effectively control fire involving ordinary combustibles, such as wood and paper. The 'B' rating indicates the extinguisher is safe to use on fires that involve flammable liquids (such as cooking oils). The final rating, 'C', indicates that the extinguishing agent is non-conductive and therefore safe to use around electrical appliances. Under no circumstances should you attempt to carry a burning pot or pan from the kitchen as there is a significant chance you will be burned. There is also the possibility of spreading fire to rooms other than the one in which it originated.



Other common sources of fire origin include clothes dryers, irons, and faulty electrical extension cords. Preventing these types of fire does not require a degree in rocket science. Clothes dryer fires can often be prevented by making sure lint is not allowed to accumulate in vent ducting. Also, cleaning the filter before each use will ensure that heat is properly evacuated. If a fire does occur in the dryer, you should first evacuate the residence and have a neighbor call 9-1-1. If you must pass by the breaker box on your way out, turn off the circuit breaker that supplies power to the appliance. Evacuating your residence may seem a bit extreme for seemingly small emergency but dryer fires have the potential to develop into full blown structure fires very quickly. As a final note, never leave home when the dryer is in operation. If you must leave your home, make sure this appliance is turned off.

Modern clothes irons are equipped with safety devices which will turn the heating elements off if the iron remains motionless for a period of time. Bear in mind though, these safety devices are not 100% effective. As with all electronic devices, they are subject to fail without warning. Never leave a clothes iron plugged in and unattended.

Faulty electrical extension cords and circuit overloads are another common home ignition source. We highly recommend that you refrain from using extension cords for anything other than providing temporary power. If you do choose to use them, inspect them periodically checking for exposed metal wire or fraying. Fires often begin when restrictions cause the cord to overheat. This can occur if the cord is subjected to sharp turns or if furniture legs are allowed to put pressure on them. Circuit overloads occur when multiple devices are plugged into the same outlet. For example, most home wall outlets have two plug-ins each. If you use an adapter to run four devices from this outlet, you may overload the circuit. Do not rely on home circuit breakers for protection.



An overloaded circuit can lead to fire.