



New York State – Department of State  
**Office of Fire Prevention and Control**  
*Home Fire Safety Checklist*



**Preparedness:**

- Is there a working smoke alarm on each level of your home and near each sleeping area?
- Are they mounted high on walls or on ceilings well away from the path of steam from bathrooms and cooking vapors from the kitchen which can result in false or nuisance alarms?
- Do you replace the batteries regularly (at least every year)?
- Do you test your smoke alarm monthly?
- Have you pushed the "Test" button to make sure everyone recognizes the sound?
- If you are hearing and/or visually impaired, do you have an smoke alarms with strobes and/or vibration signals?
- Does everyone living in your home know to escape first and then call from a safe location?
- Do you have an escape plan?
- Does it include two ways out of every room?
- Is everyone living in your home familiar with the plan?
- Do you have a designated meeting place, outside your home, that everyone knows?
- Do you practice the escape plan regularly and at varying times so the escape plan becomes second nature?
- Have you practiced your escape plan when family members are sleeping to make sure each person awakes and is able to properly respond to the smoke alarm?
- Have you practiced your plan crawling on hands and knees as though there were heat and smoke?
- Have you practiced your plan with an exit blocked to become familiar with using alternate exits?
- Is there a flashlight with good batteries by each person's bed?
- Is there a whistle by each bed to warn others of a fire or to alert rescuers to that location?
- Are your house and car keys near your bedside so they are easily accessible?
- Do windows and doors open easily from inside?
- Do you keep escape routes clear at all times (furniture, toys, storage, clutter)?
- Have you provided escape ladders or other provision from upstairs rooms? Have ladders been opened escape ladders safely from the ground floor window for practice?
- Have you ensured that family members with special needs, such as small children and the ill or frail, or those who can't wake up at the alarm sound, have a "buddy" to help them get out safely?
- Are address numbers at least 3-5" high, a contrasting color from the rest of the exterior, and clearly visible from the street?
- Do you have a single box containing all important papers (preferably fireproof)?
- Have you catalogued and updated your household inventory for insurance claims?



## Home Fire Safety Checklist (continued)

### Fire Prevention:

- Do you keep space heaters at least three feet from anything that will burn (newspapers, furniture, curtains, clothes, etc.)?
- Are all electrical cords and plugs in good condition?
- Are you careful not to overload any electrical outlet, extension cord, or power strip?
- Do you frequently check wires and cords to make sure they are not damaged?
- Are bathroom and kitchen outlets protected by ground-fault circuit interrupters?
- Are candles and oil lamps fully extinguished before leaving the room or going to sleep?
- Are candles in sturdy non-tip and non-combustible candle holders?
- Do you keep candles out of the reach of children and pets and have a rule that children may not have candles or incense in their rooms?
- Do you keep matches and lighters high, out of the reach and sight of children, preferably in a locked cabinet?
- Is there a fire extinguisher within easy access to the cooking area? Do you know how to use it?
- Do you always keep things that can burn, such as dish towels, paper and plastic, curtains, etc. at least three feet from the range top?
- Do you always remain in the room while cooking?
- Do you avoid any loose fitting clothing that could catch fire, while cooking?
- Do you turn off and unplug appliances when they are not in use? Are curling irons and hot rollers unplugged immediately after every use?
- Do you keep appliances and surrounding areas clean so that grease does not build up and catch fire?
- Is every smoker committed to never smoke in bed?
- Do you douse cigarette and cigar butts with water before dumping them in the trash?
- Do you have large, deep, non-tip ashtrays for smokers?
- Are newspapers, empty boxes, rags, paints, and gasoline cans stored in proper containers and away from heaters, outlets, or any other possible ignition source and outside the house?
- Do you have chimneys, fireplaces, wood and coal stoves, central furnaces, and space heaters inspected by professionals once a year and cleaned regularly?
- Is firewood stacked at least ten feet from the house?
- If you have a wood or coal fueled stove, is it properly installed and maintained?
- If you have a fireplace, is it fitted with approved doors or screen? Do you keep anything that will burn well away from the fireplace?
- Are all ashes and coals placed in a metal container away from the house?
- Is the exterior of your home clear of all trash, dead grass, leaves, and other combustible materials?
- Is your barbeque grill at least three feet from the house, trees, shrubs, and other things that will burn when cooking? Never use a grill on a wooden deck or porch or indoors.