



Initial Attack Fire Solutions

- In - Home Safety Preparedness List -

Fire Safe Kitchen - *What Should I Do?*

Keep Cooking Surfaces Clean and Clutter Free

- Keep appliances free of spills and grease that may catch fire.
- Keep curtains, dishtowels, plastic containers and pot holders away from hot surfaces.

Operate Microwave Ovens Safely

- Always use pot holders or oven mitts to remove food from microwaves.
- Be careful when removing a wrapper or cover from microwaved food. Steam escaping from the container can cause a burn.

Take Care of Electrical Cords

- Avoid overloading electrical outlets with too many kitchen appliances.
- Check electrical cords and plugs and discard them if they are damaged.

Install Working Smoke Alarms

- Purchase and install working smoke alarms. Special alarms with a pause feature are available for the kitchen to prevent nuisance alarms.
- Test smoke alarms monthly. For battery operated smoke alarms, replace the batteries at least once a year. Keep a record when batteries are changed.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for other maintenance information.

How Can I Cook Safely?

- Never leave cooking unattended. Oil or fat can easily ignite.
- Always turn elements off when you are finished cooking.
- Turn off or unplug electrical appliances when you are finished using them.
- Keep children a safe distance from the cooking area.
- Cooking requires you to be alert. Avoid cooking when under the influence of alcohol or medications.

Wear Short or Tight-Fitting Sleeves

- Avoid loose sleeves that may dangle into flames or onto hot elements.
- Keep the area around your stove free from items that may burn.

Turn Pot Handles In

- Prevent burns by turning pot handles towards the back of the stoves when cooking. By doing this pots cannot be pulled or knocked off the stove.
- Whenever possible use rear elements.

What Should I Do If I Have a Kitchen Fire or Elsewhere in the Home?

- Get everyone out.
- Call your local emergency number from a neighbour's phone.
- Consider using a portable fire extinguisher ONLY if the following conditions exist:
 - * Everyone has left the building.
 - * The fire department has been called.
 - * The fire is confined to a small area.
 - * A clear escape route exists between you and the fire.
 - * There is an appropriate, working fire extinguisher available.
 - * You have read the extinguisher instructions and have received training in it's safe operation. If the fire does not go out, leave your home and call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number.

What Kinds of Fires May Happen in My Kitchen?

- Grease Fire:
 - * Use a pot holder or oven mitt and slide a lid or a cookie sheet over the flames. Then turn the heat off. Never put water on a grease fire.
- Oven Fires:
 - * Close the oven door and turn the heat off.
- Microwave Fires:
 - * Keep the door closed and turn the microwave off.
- If Your Clothes Catch on Fire:
 - * Stop, Drop to the floor, cover your face with your hands, and Roll. Keep rolling until the flames are out.
- What If You Get a Burn?
 - * Immediately cool the burned area by placing it under cool water for 10-15 minutes. Cool water reduces skin damage and minimizes pain. NEVER use butter, lotions, ice or ointments to treat a burn. Don't break blisters as this could cause infection. Seek medical attention if any burns char the skin, blister, look white or become infected.

Children in The Kitchen

- The kitchen is not a play area for children.
- Establish a safe area where children can be placed away from risk but under continuous supervision.
- Never leave hot liquids or food unattended or where a child may pull them down. Keep children at a safe distance when you pour or drink hot liquids.
- Do not store tempting food items such as snacks or cereals above or near the stove.
- Prevent burns by turning pot handles towards the back of the stove.

Portable Fire Extinguishers - *Do I Need One?*

Why Do I Need a Portable Fire Extinguisher?

- It is always better to fight a fire through prevention and early detection. However, with training and practice adults can use portable fire extinguishers to extinguish small, contained fires. Extinguishing a small-contained fire, such as a cooking pan, wastebasket fire or campfire may prevent needless injury and minimize property damage.
- Portable fire extinguishers are categorized by ratings. These ratings determine the size and type of fire that the extinguisher can effectively put out. The three most common classes of fire are A, B, and C. Check the extinguisher label and purchase an extinguisher that is appropriate for the type and size of fire you may encounter. Only choose extinguishers that have been tested by an approved testing laboratory and labeled for their intended use (e.g. UL, ULC).

Where Should I Install My Portable Fire Extinguisher?

- Extinguishers should be located in convenient locations throughout the home.
- Place them in areas that contain potential fire hazards such as the kitchen (not too close to the stove), workshop, garage, and basement.
- In each area, place the extinguisher near the door so you can reach it easily, extinguish the fire and ensure a quick, safe escape.

How Do I Use A Portable Fire Extinguisher Properly?

- Always follow manufacturer's instructions for the size and type of extinguisher you are using.
- Keep well back of the fire when using the extinguisher.
- Hold the extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from you. Remove the pin or lever release mechanism, unlocking the operating lever.
- Aim the extinguisher nozzle at the base of the fire. Hold the extinguisher vertically.
- Squeeze the handle fully to release the contents of the extinguisher.
- Move the nozzle from side to side in a sweeping motion at the base of the fire. Fight the fire closest to you and continue the sweeping motion until the fire is extinguished.

If I Discover a Fire, Should I Use a Portable Fire Extinguisher?

- Yes, **ONLY** if the following conditions apply:
 - * Everyone has left the area, and is evacuating the building.
 - * The fire department has been called.
 - * The fire is contained to a small area.
 - * A clear escape route exists between you and the fire.
 - * There is an appropriate, working fire extinguisher available.
 - * You have read the extinguisher instructions and have received training in its safe operation.

Is There Anything Else I Need To Know?

- Follow manufacturer's instructions for care and maintenance.
- Check the extinguisher pressure gauge every month to ensure the unit is holding its charge.
- Regardless of the amount of extinguishing agent used, assume the extinguisher is empty. Refill or replace the extinguisher after each use.
- Rechargeable models should be serviced after every use and remember that disposable extinguishers must be replaced.

Smoke Alarms - *Do I Really Need Them?*

What Does A Smoke Alarm Do?

- Properly functioning smoke alarms provide an early warning of smoke and fire. They may be the only things standing between safe escape and being overcome by deadly gases.
- A smoke alarm becomes your "Nose at Night". Most fatal fires occur during the night when people are sleeping. The smoke and poisonous gases emitted from a fire are deadly. People may be suffocating from the gases without being awakened or even realizing there is a fire.

Are There Different Types of Smoke Alarms?

- **Ionization Smoke Alarm** - An ionization smoke alarm monitors "ions", which are electrically charged particles. The alarm sounds when the change in electrical balance reaches a pre-set level.
- **Photoelectric Smoke Alarm** - The photoelectric smoke alarm uses a beam of light and a light sensor. The alarm sounds when the smoke density reaches a pre-set level.
- Both ionization and photoelectric alarms are acceptable and perform effectively provided they are installed and maintained correctly. Smoke alarms may be hard wired or battery operated. If you have hard wired smoke alarms, install battery operated smoke alarms on every floor in case of a power failure.

Where Should I Place My Smoke Alarm?

- The installation of smoke alarms is governed by provincial regulations, and local by-laws. To ensure compliance check with your local jurisdiction.
- Read manufacturer's instructions carefully and follow them exactly.
- It is recommended that smoke alarms be installed on every floor of your home and outside each sleeping area. For maximum protection, install a smoke alarm in every bedroom, especially if you sleep with your bedroom door closed.
- Since smoke rises, install smoke alarms high on a wall or on the ceiling. Keep smoke alarms away from anything that can blow smoke away from the sensor, such as windows, air registers and ceiling fans.

If The Smoke Alarm Goes Off, What Should I Do?

- Smoke alarms give your family an early warning of smoke or fire. It is your responsibility to get yourself and your family out of your home safely. You can save precious minutes by planning and practicing your home fire escape drill. Planning and practicing will help your family do the right thing.
- **Plan and practice**, your home escape plan, identifying two ways out of every room.
- **Teach all family members**, to follow the home escape plan when the smoke alarm sounds. If it is safe to leave the room, stay below the smoke and leave by the quickest and safest route.
- **If you must escape**, from the second floor or higher, plan a safe way to the ground. Install escape ladders for quick and safe evacuation.
- **Go directly**, to your family meeting place and call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number from a neighbour's phone. Do not re-enter the building until the fire department says it is "safe" to do so.

Is There Anything Else I Need To Know?

- **Test** - Smoke alarms should be tested and maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Alarms should be tested once a month by pushing the test button and listening for the alarm.
- **Change Batteries** - For battery operated smoke alarms, replace batteries at least once a year or for extended life batteries according to manufacturer's instructions. Batteries should also be replaced when the smoke alarm makes a chirping sound.
- **Clean** - Smoke alarms should be cleaned, at least once every six months, by gently vacuuming the exterior.
- **Replace** - Smoke alarms do wear out and should be replaced at least every ten years. Smoke alarms installed in or near the kitchen should include a pause feature.

Carbon Monoxide Safety - *Understanding the 'silent killer'*

What is Carbon Monoxide?

- Carbon monoxide (Commonly known as CO) is a colourless, odourless toxic gas. When inhaled, CO interfere with the blood's ability to absorb and transport oxygen.
- Carbon monoxide is produced when fuels are burned incompletely. Tobacco smoking, idling gasoline-powered vehicles, and the burning of oil, coal, wood, charcoal, kerosene, propane or natural gas all produce carbon monoxide.
- The risk of carbon monoxide poisoning from regularly maintained appliances that are properly ventilated is extremely low.
- But improperly installed, operated or poorly maintained appliances that use these fuels may create unsafe levels of CO. In enclosed spaces like your home, vehicle, cottage, boat, recreational vehicle or tent, even a small amount of CO is dangerous.

What Are The Symptoms Of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning?

- Exposure to carbon monoxide causes flu-like symptoms such as headaches, nausea, dizziness, drowsiness, confusion, impaired judgement, loss of manual dexterity, and even loss of consciousness. In severe cases, CO poisoning can cause brain damage and death. The elderly, children, people with heart and respiratory conditions, and pets may be particularly sensitive to CO and may feel the effects sooner.

What Do I Do If CO Poisoning Is Suspected?

- Leave the building immediately.
- Call 911 or your local fire department.
- Seek medical help.

How Do Heating Appliances Work?

- The safe operation of any fuel-burning appliance requires:
 - * An adequate supply of air for combustion.
 - * Effective venting of the products of combustion to the outdoors.
 - * During the normal operation of a heating appliance, fuel mixes with air to produce carbon dioxide (CO₂), water vapour and useful heat. Small amounts of carbon monoxide may also be formed. If there is not enough air available, or if the burner is not operating properly, incomplete combustion will result in excessive production of carbon monoxide. The vent or chimney usually removes all of the products of combustion from the building; but if the vent is not effective, products of combustion can spill into the home.

What Should I Do To Prevent A Carbon Monoxide Hazard?

- Immediately move your car out of the garage after starting it. This prevents exhaust fumes seeping into the building through connecting doors or vents.
- Familiarize yourself with the operating and maintenance manuals provided with your fuel burning appliances.
- Have your fuel burning appliances checked regularly by a qualified service technician or heating contractor.
- Gas appliances should be checked by a licensed gas fitter. Some appliances manufacturers recommend annual inspection and maintenance.
- Check that chimneys and vents are not corroded or blocked (by bird's nest, snow or ice or other debris).
- Keep combustion air inlet ducts clear. They can become blocked by accumulated snow and ice or other debris.
- Operate your kitchen exhaust fan when using your gas stove. Combustion products and water vapour produced when cooking are then ventilated outside.
- If you are adding a new fuel burning appliance or making changes to your home's ventilation system including adding new windows and additional insulation, consult a qualified heating contractor. Changes may upset the operation of existing appliances.
- Use appliances only for the purpose for which they are intended. Portable propane camping equipment and gas barbecues are approved for outdoors use only. They should never be used inside cabins, recreational vehicles, boats or tents. Read the labels on recreational appliances and follow the manufacturer's operating instructions.
- Never use a gas cooking range for space heating purposes.
- Do not operate chainsaws, lawn mowers, snow blowers in a closed area (Garage, workshop, etc.)
- Open a window when using a wood fireplace or operating large kitchen/bathroom fans in a tightly sealed house.
- Inform your family members about the symptoms and causes of CO poisoning. Work together to minimize the production of CO in your home.

Danger Signs

- You or members of your family have symptoms of carbon monoxide exposure.
- Abnormal odour when your furnace or other fuel burning appliance turns on.
- The air feels stale or stuffy.
- Abnormal moisture forming on windows and walls.

How To Purchase A Carbon Monoxide Alarm

- When you buy a CO alarm, make sure it is certified to the latest Canadian Standards Association requirements. CSA Standard CAN/CGA - 6.19 was amended in 1999. New provisions include Time-of-Manufacture and In-Service reliability testing. Carbon monoxide alarms that comply with the latest Canadian requirement will be labeled CAN/CGA - 6.19 Revision 1999. Units tested and certified by CSA will have their blue flame logo.
- Follow the manufacturers instructions for installation, proper use and maintenance. CO alarms are usually installed adjacent to sleeping areas. More than one may be required if sleeping areas are located on different levels of your home.
- While carbon monoxide alarms may provide an extra measure or warning, they should never be relied upon as a substitute for regular inspection and maintenance of natural gas, propane, kerosene, oil or wood burning appliances, venting and chimneys. A CO alarm should not be used as a substitute for a smoke alarm.

Home Fire Escape Plan - *Do I Really Need One?*

What Are The Realities Of Fire?

- Fire can destroy anyone's home. Fires are real, not just events in the news or movies. Most people have no idea how destructive a fire can be. Here are some facts that everyone should know:
 - * Fire creates thick black smoke that makes it difficult to see.
 - * Smoke is more deadly than flames. The poisonous gases in the smoke can kill you. Many fire fatalities occur because people do not stay low and crawl under the smoke to a safe exit. Most fire occur at night while people are sleeping. Many people suffocate without ever waking and realizing the fire danger.
 - * Fire spreads rapidly. A home can be totally consumed by fire in less than five minutes. Working smoke alarms will provide an early warning of the problem, and a home fire escape plan will provide time to escape.

How Do I Make A Home Fire Escape Plan?

- During a fire there is no time to stop and think about an escape route - seconds are important knowing what to do before a fire occurs can save your life! Make an escape plan and practice it with your family today. The four simple steps to follow when making an escape plan are:
 - * **Step 1 Install working smoke alarms** - Install a working smoke alarm on every level of your home and outside sleeping areas. For maximum protection install smoke alarms in every bedroom, especially if you sleep with your bedroom door closed. Test your smoke alarms monthly to ensure they are functioning properly.
 - * **Step 2 Draw a floor plan of your home** - Make an outline of each floor of your home and label each room. Identify at least two exits from each room. Windows can serve as the second emergency exit. If a window is considered an exit, make sure all family member can open the locks and windows easily for a quick escape. Security bars on windows and doors must have a quick-release mechanism to make escape possible.
 - * **Step 3 Choose a family meeting place** - The meeting place should be safe distance away from the house. All family members should be taught to report to meeting place after escaping a fire. One person should go to a neighbour's house or the nearest phone in a safe location to contact 9-1-1 or their local emergency number. Know the emergency telephone number for your area.
 - * **Step 4 Schedule a home fire drill** - Practice getting out of the house through the various exits by holding fire drills. Practice your escape plan by having a fire drill at least twice each year.

What Should I Do If There Is a Fire?

Get Out Quickly and Safely

- When the smoke alarm sounds, immediately start your escape. Do not try to gather possessions or pets.

Check the Door

- Stay low behind the door, reach up and feel the door and the door handle for heat.

If the Door Feels Cool

- Brace yourself against the door and open it slowly. If it's safe, leave the building and go directly to your meeting place. If you encounter smoke, crawl low under the smoke. Cleaner air is down low, near the floor. Once you are out of the building, stay out. There is nothing more important in your house than you and your family. Go to the meeting place to make sure everyone is safe. Phone 9-1-1 or your local emergency number from a neighbour's house.

If the Door feels Warm

- Or you see smoke or flames on the other side of the door, shut the door, and use your second escape route. If you must escape from an upper story window of a multi-level home, make sure you have a safe way to reach the ground, such as a fire escape ladder.

If You are Trapped

- Seal the openings around the door and vents with bedding or towels. Call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number and notify the fire department of your location. If it is safe to open a window and there is no smoke, open it to signal and yell for help.

Is There Anything Else I Need To Know?

- There are some special situations to consider when developing and practicing your home fire escape plan, such as:
- **Older Adults** - An older adult with restricted mobility should sleep on the ground floor. A special plan should be made to provide assistance to this person.
- **Children** - Infants and many young children will also need assistance when escaping from the home. A special plan should be made to provide assistance to them. All children should be taught the steps to follow when escaping from the home. They should be involved with making and practicing the family home fire escape plan.
- **People with Physical Disabilities** - Anyone with physical disabilities should have their bedroom on the ground floor. A special plan should be developed which provided assistance when escaping. If a family member has a hearing impairment, special smoke alarms are available.
- **Public Buildings** - Look for exit signs. Knowing your escape routes is important - even when shopping, visiting the library, or inside any public buildings. If you hear a fire alarm in a public building, follow any instructions given over the public address system or from adults working in the building. In a hotel, take your room key with you as you may encounter smoke and need to re-enter your room for safety.

Propane Gas Safety

What you and your family need to know

- Propane is safe, economical and environmentally friendly fuel. It can be used to heat homes and water, cook indoors and out, dry clothes and heat pools and spas. In properly maintained and operated systems, propane is safe, but like any other fuel gas it must be handled with care and can be dangerous if leaked or spilled. Propane has an odour - a scent similar to rotten eggs or boiling cabbage - so you can easily detect it. Propane is heavier than air, so when checking for leaks, be aware that it gathers in low-lying areas. *Smell gas... act fast!*

What to do if you smell propane

- Extinguish all smoking materials and open flames.
- Do Not touch electrical switches.
- Do Not light matches or create any other source of ignition,
- Leave the premises.
- Get everyone out of the building or vehicle IMMEDIATELY. Move upwind, away from smell.
- Go to a nearby phone and call your propane supplier, 911 or your Fire Department emergency number.
- Do Not re-enter the area until it is safe.
- After the area has been deemed safe, a service technician must repair the leak, turn on the propane, check all the propane appliances and re-light the pilots on the appliances.

In an emergency can I shut off my propane supply?

- Yes, if it is necessary to turn off your propane supply before the propane supplier or Fire Department arrives, you should know the proper procedure.
- Give the valve at the meter (if so supplied) a quarter turn in either direction so that the lever is crosswise to the pipe to turn it off.
- If propane tanks or cylinders are used and you are not sure how to shut off the gas supply, contact your propane supplier for instructions.

Can I turn the meter or tank / cylinder (s) on again ?

- Leave it to an expert. Once the propane is shut off, a qualified technician who can check out the appliances and venting should turn it back on.

General Safety Reminders

- Always store propane cylinders outside in a well ventilated and secure location - never inside an enclosed building.
- Propane can cause severe frostbite if it comes in contact with your skin or eyes. Keep your head away from the valves on your tank or cylinder. A sudden release of propane liquid from the safety valve could result in serious injury.
- Keep your tank painted a white, aluminum or other reflective colour. A rusty, unpainted or dark-coloured tank does not reflect sunlight and may absorb heat causing an increase in pressure, leading to a possible discharge from the pressure release valve.
- All lines not attached to appliances must be closed and terminated with caps or plugs.
- Treat all propane gas odours seriously. Contact your propane supplier, 911 or your Fire Department emergency number if you suspect a leak.
- If you or a member of your family has concerns about your ability to smell propane, consider the purchase of a propane gas alarm. But remember, while an alarm may provide an extra measure of warning, it should never be relied upon as a substitute for regular inspection and maintenance of propane appliances.

Barbecuing Safety

- Inspect and clean your gas barbecue before using it for the first time each season. If the fittings, flex hose or burners are worn or rusted, replace them. Use a flexible brush (made for this purpose) to clean the tubes between the gas valve and the burners, as blockages can occur due to spiders or insects. Replace missing or worn “O” Rings.
- Always check the cylinder connections for leaks before lighting for the first time each season or any time you have replaced the tank. Use a leak-detection solution (or 50% liquid soap and water) to check all connections for tightness. **Do not use matches or a lighter to check for leaks.**
- Always use your grill outdoors in a well-ventilated area clear of the house or other combustibles. **Never use it inside.**
- Always open the barbecue lid before lighting.
- Never leave the barbecue unattended while cooking. Children should be taught to stay away from the barbecue as it may cause serious burn injuries.
- Use or store cylinders in an upright, vertical position. Store cylinders outdoors away from heat or sources of ignition (matches, smoking materials, etc.) in a secure, well ventilated area.
- Before a cylinder is filled, have the supplier check for dents, damage, rust or leaks. Cylinders do not last forever. The cylinders must be inspected and re-qualified or replaced every ten years. A date stamp on the collar of the cylinder indicates when it was last qualified.
- When transporting after fill-up, take the cylinder home immediately. Never leave it in your vehicle. Secure and transport in an upright position keeping the area where the cylinder is located ventilated with the cylinder valve closed and plugged or capped.
- When not in use, make sure the grill burner controls are turned off and the cylinder valve is closed.
- Make sure the gas grill is shut off and completely cooled before covering it after use.

Appliance Operations and Maintenance

- Refer to the manuals provided with your appliances. They contain operating and maintenance instructions. Have a Gas Contractor service your appliances, vents and combustion air openings regularly to ensure safe and reliable operation. If you are in an earthquake susceptible zone, ask the contractor to ensure your water heater has been secured as an earthquake-preparedness precaution.
- Propane appliances, like any other gas appliance, can produce carbon monoxide if not maintained properly. Always be sure your home, camper, or RV is properly ventilated, and install approved carbon monoxide detectors (products with CSA 6.19-01 on the packaging). More than one may be required if sleeping areas are located on different levels of your home.

Meter Tips - *If you are served propane by meter*

- Know where your propane meter is.
- Keep it clear for emergency responses.
- Know how to shut off your propane at the meter.
- Keep a wrench in a convenient location.
- Do not enclose your meter.
- Do not tie pets or other object to the meter or outside propane pipes.

Keep your Meter Clear

- Accumulated snow and ice places stress on your meter piping. Damage to the piping can cause a leak. Blocked regulator vents can dangerously over-pressure the system, affect appliance operation and affect service.
- Keep the meter clear of ice or snow.
- Do not shovel snow up against the meter,
- Take care in using a snow blower or plow near your meter.
- Keep eavestroughs clear and in good repair so that water does not drip on the meter and cause ice build-up on your propane meter or piping.

Call Before You Dig

- If underground pipes bring propane to your house, **Call Before You Dig**, before making an addition to your home, doing major landscaping or installing fence posts. Check your local directory for the phone number.

“Working Smoke Alarms, Carbon Monoxide detectors and a well-planned Home Fire Escape Plan can save your life!”

This list is not intended to provide comprehensive advise on safety and injury procedures. No liability whatsoever is assumed for any injuries, damages or losses that may arise out of its use.

Information contained on this list is sponsored by: Office of the Fire Commissioner, B.C., Terasen Gas, Insurance Brokers Association, BC Gas, Pacific Northern Gas Ltd., Gas Safety Program - Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Propane Gas Association of Canada Inc.

S - Stop

T - Think

O - Organize

P - Prepare



Initial Attack Fire Solutions

250-319-0380

E-mail ken@iafs.ca

Web Site www.iafs.ca