

TAKE 5



HOME HAZARD HUNT



***Do you believe that your home is a safe place to be?
Statistics show that most fires, accidents, and
injuries occur in the home.***

An important step in family preparedness is the identification of hazards in your home. Once the hazards are identified, it doesn't take much time or effort to make your home a safer place to live.

Getting Started: Using the checklist below, involve the whole family, especially your children, in a home hazard hunt. Remember that anything that can move, break, fall, or burn is a potential hazard. Foresight, imagination, and common sense are the only tools you will need! After identifying what needs to be done, devise a plan to do it.

Kitchen

Yes/No

- Wear snug-fitting clothes when cooking
- Do not leave cooking food unattended
- Keep pan handles turned in while cooking
- Keep a pan lid nearby in case of fire
- Keep cooking areas clean and clear of combustibles
- Keep appliance cords from dangling
- Ensure outlets near the kitchen sink are GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupt)-equipped
- Keep sharp knives out of reach of children

Outside

Yes/No

- Clear dry vegetation and rubbish from around the house
- Use barbecue grills away from buildings and vegetation
- Dispose of barbecue briquettes in a metal container
- Maintain a "greenbelt" around rural buildings
- Check with the fire department before burning debris or using a burn barrel

All Rooms

Yes/No

- Ensure floor coverings (rugs, carpets) are properly secured to prevent tripping hazards
- Separate draw cords on blinds and drapes to reduce strangulation hazards for kids
- Ensure room exits are unobstructed

Smoking and Matches

Yes/No

- Store matches and lighters out of reach of children
- Use large, deep, non-tip ashtrays
- Never smoke when drowsy or in bed
- Dispose of ashes and cigarette butts in a metal can at least daily
- Check furniture for smoldering cigarettes every night, especially after parties

Electricity

Yes/No

- Avoid the use of extension cords (If used, ensure the correct wattage rating)
- Plug only one heat-producing device into an electrical outlet
- Ensure cords are not placed under rugs
- Verify circuits are not overloaded
- Replace damaged cords, plugs, sockets
- Use bulbs with the correct wattage for lamps and fixtures
- Check fuses/circuit breakers for the correct amperage ratings
- Do not override or bypass fuses or circuit breakers

Clothes Washer and Dryer

Yes/No

- Verify that appliances are properly grounded
- Ensure lint filter is clean and serviceable
- Check vent hose and vent line to ensure they are clean and provide unobstructed airflow



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Garage/Attic/Shed

Yes/No

- Use gasoline as a motor fuel only and never use or store it inside the home
- Keep only a small quantity of gasoline, if necessary, in an approved container locked in the garage or shed
- Keep flammable liquids such as paints and thinners in their original containers and store on or near the ground and away from sources of heat, sparks, or flame
- Store used oily rags in sealed metal containers
- Never store combustibles such as newspapers and magazines in your attic

Heating Equipment

Yes/No

- Ensure fireplace inserts and gas/wood stoves comply with local codes
- Clean and inspect chimney annually
- Dispose of ashes in metal container
- Keep clothes, furnishings, and electrical cords at least 12" from wall heaters and 36" from portable heaters
- Service furnace annually
- Set water heater thermostat at 120° F
- Elevate new or replacement gas water heaters at least 18" above the floor

Bathrooms

Yes/No

- Store poisonous cleaning supplies and medicines in "child-proofed" cabinets
- Replace glass bottles with plastic containers
- Ensure all outlets are GFCI equipped

Family Preparedness

Yes/No

- Plan two unobstructed exits from every room, including the second floor, and make sure everyone knows them
- Designate a meeting place outside
- Have an out-of-state contact for family to call after a disaster/emergency
- Develop a fire escape plan and practice it regularly
- Store important papers and valuables in a fire-proof safe or cabinet
- Maintain proper insurance coverage for your home and its contents (earthquake, flood, renter's, fire)

Fire Extinguisher

Yes/No

- Verify that an all purpose fire extinguisher (Class ABC) is maintained in an accessible location
- Ensure that all occupants know how to use it
- Are additional fire extinguishers kept in the kitchen, garage, basement, and sleeping area?

Smoke Alarm

Yes/No

- Installed properly on every level?
- Tested monthly?
- Battery replaced annually or per manufacturer's recommendation?

Earthquake Hazards (All Rooms)

Yes/No

- Bolt heavy, tall, upright furniture to wall studs
- Lock or remove rollers on beds, furniture and appliances
- Secure hanging plants and light fixtures to prevent swinging into walls or windows and breaking
- Locate beds away from windows and heavy wall-mounted objects
- Secure kitchen and bathroom cabinets with latches
- Secure items on shelves with quake mats, Velcro™, low shelf barrier, etc.
- Store heavy and/or breakable items on lower shelves
- Strap water heater to wall studs
- Use flexible connections on gas appliances
- Check chimney for loose bricks, and repair as needed
- Check foundation for cracks, and repair as needed
- Bolt home to foundation to prevent shifting during an earthquake
- Secure mirrors and pictures to the wall or hang them with heavy wire, looped through eye screws or tongue-in-groove hangers

Practice drills are a great way to help your family plan and remember what to do in case of a disaster or emergency