FIRE SAFETY & PREVENTION IN THE HOME

Help us, help you be home fire safe
DID YOU KNOW?

When you’re asleep, you won’t smell the smoke from a fire. The misuse of heaters, cigarettes and candles are common causes of fires.

You’re twice as likely to die in a home fire if you don’t have a working smoke alarm.

When you’re asleep, you won’t smell the smoke from a fire.
FIRE & RESCUE NSW RESPONDS TO APPROXIMATELY 4500 RESIDENTIAL FIRES EACH YEAR. HALF OF THESE FIRES START IN THE KITCHEN, MOSTLY DUE TO UNATTENDED COOKING. ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES AND FAULTS CAUSE ALMOST 40% OF HOME FIRES. THE MAJORITY OF DEATHS OCCUR WITH FIRES THAT START IN THE LOUNGE ROOM OR BEDROOM.
Congratulations, you’ve taken the first step in making your home a safer place.

By reading this brochure, being informed and taking action on some of these helpful tips, you’re helping to ensure that you and your family stay safe.

At Fire & Rescue NSW, we believe fighting fires isn’t just about calling us in when things get out of control. It all starts with you in the home.

Our role is to inform the public about fire safety before a fire actually happens. Help us, help you be home fire safe is the core of what we do.

If you do your bit to minimise the risks in your home, we can all stay safer together.

Fire & Rescue NSW.
1 PREVENTING A FIRE IN YOUR HOME
   a. Cooking fires
   b. Common fires
   c. Barbecue safety

2 PREPARING YOUR HOME
   a. Smoke alarms
   b. Plan a safe escape
   c. Bushfire home preparation
   d. Are you prepared to keep your family safe?

3 PROTECTING YOU AND YOUR FAMILY IN A HOUSE FIRE
   a. What to do in case of a fire
   b. Fire safety equipment
1
PREVENTING A FIRE IN YOUR HOME

a. Cooking fires
b. Common fires
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COOKING FIRES

The leading cause of home fires in NSW is leaving cooking unattended.

FACT – Almost half of all house fires start in the kitchen.

Never leave cooking unattended. Stay in the kitchen while cooking and turn off the stove before you leave.

Don’t put anything metallic in the microwave and always double-check the timer.

Avoid cooking under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

There are many dangerous substances in the kitchen. Flammable materials such as aerosols, cleaning agents and cooking oils should be stored away from heat.
IF YOUR PAN CATCHES FIRE
HERE’S WHAT TO DO

1. Keep matches out of reach of children.

2. Turn off the stove (if safe to do so) and use the lid to cover the flame.

3. Use a fire extinguisher or fire blanket in the first few seconds of ignition if you are confident.

4. Never use water to put out a fat or oil fire.

5. Leave the kitchen, close the door and call Triple Zero ’000’.

6. Turn pot handles inwards.

7. Keep your oven, rangehood and grill clean and in good working order. A build-up of grease and fat can ignite in a fire.

8. Keep loose clothing, fabrics, tea towels, curtains and flammable items away from the stove.

Children need constant supervision to protect them from the dangers of fires, burns and scalds.
COMMON FIRES

Help us, help you by exercising some of these fire safety steps in your home:

ELECTRICAL SAFETY

1. Don’t overload powerpoints and powerboards.
2. Regularly check electrical leads for damage and faults.
3. Never use faulty electrical leads or appliances.
4. Store your electric blanket safely – roll don’t fold.
5. Before going to bed, turn off all electrical appliances at the powerpoint.
6. Turn off electric blankets and heaters when you’re not at home and before getting into bed.

HEATERS & OPEN FIRES

1. Keep everything one metre away from your heater.
2. Install and use as per manufacturer’s instructions.
3. If you suspect a fault, have the heater serviced or replaced.
4. Always supervise young children in rooms with open fires or working heaters.
5. Ensure flues and chimneys are regularly cleaned.
6. Strong fire screens should be set up in front of open fires.
7. Never use wheat bags in bed.
CLOTHES DRYER

1. Clean your lint filter before or after each use.
2. Ensure there is adequate air flow around your dryer.
3. Don’t leave the dryer operating when you’re not home.

CIGARETTES & CANDLES

1. Keep candles well away from curtains with open windows and put them out when you leave the room.
2. Keep matches and lighters out of reach of children.
3. An adult should be present at all times when a candle is being used.
4. Extinguish cigarettes properly before disposal.
5. Never smoke in bed. It’s extremely dangerous.
6. Smokers should only use child-proof lighters and deep ashtrays.

Help us, help you be home fire safe
The backyard barbie can be a common cause of fires during summer. Here are some pointers:

- Keep barbecues clean and ensure all gas hoses and connections are correctly fitted.
- After using your barbecue, remove all excess fat so it doesn’t become a fire hazard.
- Check cylinder and hoses for leaks by brushing or spraying with soapy water.
- Replace cylinders if they appear damaged or rusty.
Liquid Petroleum Gas [LPG] can be extremely dangerous if stored or used incorrectly.

LPG & GAS CYLINDER SAFETY

Never use portable LPG cylinders indoors or in confined spaces.

Always read and follow the manufacturer’s instructions for maintenance.

Check the expiry date before using a gas cylinder.

Ensure connections on hoses are tight with no leakage.

Never check for leaks with a naked flame.

Never use a hose that has perished or is cracked.

There should be an adult in charge of a lit barbecue at all times.

Help us, help you be home fire safe

1

PREVENTING

12
PREPARING YOUR HOME

a. Smoke alarms
b. Plan a safe escape
c. Bushfire home preparation
d. Are you prepared to keep your family safe?
1. It’s the law to have at least one working smoke alarm installed on every level of your home. This includes owner occupied homes, rental properties, relocatable homes, caravans and camper-vans or any other residential building where people sleep.

2. Fire & Rescue NSW recommends the installation of alarms with the Australian Standard symbol on the packaging. Ideally alarms should be hard-wired and interconnected.

3. There are different types of smoke alarms available:
   - Standard battery-operated alarms.
   - Mains-powered smoke alarms.
   - Smoke alarms with ten year lithium batteries.
   - Strobe light and vibrating pad alarms. These are available for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. For more information contact the Deaf Society of NSW on 02 8833 3600.

4. Your local Fire & Rescue NSW station will be happy to give you advice on which type is best suited for you.

1. Avoid fitting smoke alarms in or near your kitchen or bathroom.

2. The ideal position is on the ceiling between sleeping and living areas.

3. In addition to the minimum requirement, Fire & Rescue NSW recommends installing smoke alarms in all bedrooms where people sleep.

4. Hard-wired smoke alarms need to be installed by an electrician.

5. Always install smoke alarms in accordance with manufacturer’s instructions.

6. If it is difficult for you to fit one yourself, contact your local Fire & Rescue NSW station for help. They’ll be happy to install your smoke alarm battery for you.
1. Test your smoke alarm batteries every month by pressing and holding the test button for five seconds. Replace batteries every 12 months.

2. Vacuum dust off alarms every six months.

3. Replace smoke alarms with a new alarm every ten years or earlier, if specified by the manufacturer.

For more information on smoke alarms, visit: [fire.nsw.gov.au](http://fire.nsw.gov.au) and [planning.nsw.gov.au](http://planning.nsw.gov.au)
FACT - Having a home escape plan in conjunction with a working smoke alarm will greatly increase your chances of getting out safely. *Every second counts.*

**PLAN A SAFE ESCAPE**

**BE PREPARED BY MAKING A PLAN OF ESCAPE**

- Draw a floor plan of your home, including two ways of escape from each room. Plan an escape route and ensure everyone knows how to get out.

- Blocked exits are a hazard. Keep exits clear.

- Keep door and window keys in or next to locks so they can be opened easily.

- Decide on a meeting place outside e.g. the letterbox. Provide alternatives and someone to assist for anyone with a disability.
Decide on a meeting place outside e.g. the letterbox.

Plan two ways out of a room.
- Primary
- Secondary

Draw your escape plan here and share it with your family.
BUSHFIRE HOME PREPARATION

PREPARE

Prepare your home. A well prepared home is more likely to survive a fire.

Prepare your family. Make a Bush Fire Survival Plan and talk about it with your family.


ACT

Know the fire danger rating for your area. The higher the fire danger, the more dangerous the conditions.

Use the fire danger rating as your trigger for action. Don’t leave it until the last minute.

SURVIVE

Follow your Bush Fire Survival Plan.

Leaving early is your safest option.

Leaving early means leaving well before the fire affects your area or your home.

Stay up to date on bush fires in your area by monitoring www.rfs.nsw.gov.au, listening to local radio or monitoring social media.

In an emergency call Triple Zero ‘000’.

Sourced from RFS
Insurance: Maintain adequate levels of home and contents insurance.

ARE YOU PREPARED TO KEEP YOUR FAMILY SAFE?

- Cut back any overhanging trees or shrubs and dispose of cuttings appropriately.
- Check the condition of your roof and replace any damaged or missing tiles.
- Non-combustible fences are the most effective at withstanding the intense heat generated by a bush fire.
- Store wood piles well away from the house and keep covered.
- If you have a water tank, dam or swimming pool, consider installing a Static Water Supply sign (SWS).
- Ensure you have a hose which is long enough to reach every part of the house.
- Plant trees and shrubs that are less likely to ignite due to their low oil content.
- Non-combustible fences are the most effective at withstanding the intense heat generated by a bush fire.
- Have a non-combustible doormat.
- Enclose underfloor areas.
- Install metal flywire or screens to the outside windows and doors.
- If you have a water tank, dam or swimming pool, consider installing a Static Water Supply sign (SWS).
- Make sure the pressure relief valves on LPG cylinders face outwards (so flame is not directed towards the house).
- Check the condition of external walls or cladding and seal any gaps.
- Clean leaves from the roof, gutters and downpipes and fit quality metal leaf guards.
- Ensure you have a hose which is long enough to reach every part of the house.
- Keep garden mulch away from the house and keep grass short.
- Remove and store any flammable items away from the house.
- Check the condition of external walls or cladding and seal any gaps.
- Install metal flywire or screens to the outside windows and doors.
- If you have a water tank, dam or swimming pool, consider installing a Static Water Supply sign (SWS).
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PROTECTING YOU AND YOUR FAMILY IN A HOUSE FIRE

a. What to do in case of a fire
b. Fire safety equipment
WHAT TO DO
IN CASE OF A FIRE

Help us help you, by using the following caution when in an emergency:

FACT - A fire can become unsurvivable in less than three minutes.

If you hear your smoke alarm and there’s a fire in your home:

1. Keep calm and act quickly, get everyone out as soon as possible.
2. Don’t waste time investigating what’s happened or rescuing valuables.
3. If there is smoke, keep low where the air is clearer.
4. If it’s safe to do so, close all doors on the way out to prevent fire and smoke from spreading.
5. Once you get out, stay out. Never go back inside a burning building.
6. Call Triple Zero (000) from a neighbour’s or your mobile phone.
FIRE SAFETY
EQUIPMENT

Practise what to do. Know your equipment. Only use a fire blanket or fire extinguisher within the first few seconds of ignition if you feel confident.

FIRE BLANKETS

1. Keep fire blankets accessible in the kitchen and away from the stove.
2. Take hold of the two tabs and pull the blanket from its container.
3. Hold the tabs towards yourself and protect your hands.
4. Walk slowly towards the fire and stretch out your arms in front of you.
5. As the blanket touches the top of the stove, place it over the fire.
6. Leave the blanket over the pot for at least thirty minutes.
7. If it’s safe to do so, turn off the gas/electricity at the stove or at the main supply.
8. Call Triple Zero (000). Firefighters will attend.

NB. A fire blanket is designed to be used once only.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

PASS - Pull Aim Squeeze Sweep

- Pull out the pin and test the extinguisher. Walk slowly to within 2 to 3 metres of the fire.
- Aim at the base of the fire.
- Squeeze the handles together. Sweep the powder at the flames from side to side. Continue until the fire is out.

Follow the manufacturer’s instructions. Locate equipment near exit door.
USEFUL LINKS

For further information visit fire.nsw.gov.au or contact your local fire station.

You can also contact us at:
Fire & Rescue NSW’s Community Engagement Unit ceu@fire.nsw.gov.au
1800 151 614 / 02 9742 7179

Twitter.com/FRNSW
Facebook.com/FRNSW
YouTube.com/FireAndRescueNSW
Fire & Rescue NSW’s resources and programs include:

- Pre Ed – fire safety education for pre-schools.
- Fire Ed – fire safety education for primary schools.
- Juvenile Intervention Fire Awareness Program.
- Senior Ed – fire safety education for seniors.
- Smoke Alarm Subsidy Scheme – subsidised specialised smoke alarms for people who are deaf or hard of hearing – Deaf Society of NSW.
- University Student and First Home Leavers Fire Safety.
- Home Fire Safety Checks for at-risk community groups.
- Protect Your Mob – Aboriginal fire safety education.