



Fire Safety Tips or the Rural Homeowner

A GREATER DISTANCE FROM FIRE PROTECTION

As a rural homeowner, you are at a greater distance from fire protection and should take every precaution to prevent a fire on your property or in your home.



WOOD STOVES

Wood stoves are popular sources of heat in our area. Use yours safely-consider the following factors.

- Don't place the stove in an area of high traffic.
- Keep anything that can catch fire at least 36" from the stove.
- Don't dry clothing over the stove-clothes can fall and ignite.
- Install your stove in accordance with local regulations and those suggested by the manufacturer.
- Ensure proper ventilation in the house.
- Avoid placing ashes near combustible materials before you are certain all burning embers are out.
- Inspect and clean the stove, chimney connector, and chimney at least once a year.
- Check twice monthly for creosote buildup in your chimney connector and chimney.
- Never use or store flammable liquids, especially gasoline, in the vicinity of the stove.
- Burn only seasoned wood-green wood burns inefficiently and causes a buildup of creosote.
- Be aware of the dangers of CO poisoning, which can occur due to incomplete combustion in your wood stove, furnace, or appliances. CO detectors are available in stores.

ALTERNATIVE HEATERS

- Use heaters only in well-ventilated rooms.
- Place heaters where they will not be knocked over easily.
- Do not use heaters to dry clothing or other items.
- Keep heaters at a safe distance from curtains, furniture and all combustibles

DRIVEWAYS

Vermont's excellent fire fighting forces and equipment will be of no avail to you should your home and/or property be inaccessible to them. Make sure your driveway remains unobstructed!

Your driveway should be at least 20' wide to accommodate emergency equipment. It is also necessary to have 13'6" of vertical clearance, as well. Any bridges or culverts in your drive should be approved by the fire department. Turning radius and driveway gradient must also meet with fire department approval.

Be certain to keep your address number visible! Teach your children about 911 and how to give the emergency operator directions to your location!



SMOKE DETECTORS

The National Fire Alarm Code states that homes must have smoke detectors on every level of the home, including the basement, and outside each sleeping area. Detectors should be placed on the ceiling at least 4 inches from the nearest wall, or high on the wall, 4-12 inches from the ceiling. This 4-inch minimum is important to keep detectors out of possible "dead air" spaces because hot air is turbulent and may bounce so much it misses spots near a surface.

- Test your detector at least once a month.
- Replace smoke detector batteries twice a year.
- Clean your smoke detector regularly-follow manufacturer's instructions.

SAFE COOKING PRACTICES

- Don't leave food unattended on the stove.
- Keep dangling clothing away from burners.
- Keep appliances clean and free of grease and crumbs.
- Keep curtains and other combustibles away from the stove.
- Make sure the stove is off and small appliances are unplugged before going to bed.

HOME FIRE DRILLS

Talk with your family about the exits from each room in your house-both doors and windows. Decide on a meeting place outside should a fire occur. Emphasize: never go back inside a burning building for any reason.



BRUSH FIRES

- Always obtain the proper permits before burning any brush or grass. This includes contacting an official of your town for a burning permit
- Avoid burning on windy days or during dry spells.
- Create a safety zone around your house and buildings. Clear flammable vegetation within at least a 30-foot radius of your home to create a firewise landscape.
- Stack firewood away from your home.

ELECTRICAL WIRING

- Replace wiring if it's frayed or cracked.
- Do not place wiring under rugs, over nails or in high traffic areas.
- Avoid overloading outlets and make sure they stay cool to the touch.
- Keep covers over electric plates and avoid exposed wiring.

SAFE SMOKING HABITS

- Never smoke in bed.
- Keep ashtrays away from upholstered furniture and curtains.
- Always attend burning cigarettes.

CHILDREN AND FIRE SAFETY

- Keep lighters and matches away from children.
- Teach children how to call for emergency assistance.
- Use safety plugs in electrical outlets.

FIRE SAFETY TECHNOLOGY

- Keep a fire extinguisher handy, especially near the kitchen.
- Consider installing residential fire sprinklers.

USE CANDLES CAREFULLY

- Always keep burning candles within sight. Extinguish all candles when leaving the room or before going to sleep.
- Always use a candleholder specifically designed for candle use.
- Place lighted candles where they won't be knocked over by children, pets or anyone else.
- Keep burning candles away from furniture, drapes, bedding,
- Carpets, books, flammable decorations, etc..
- Read and carefully follow all manufacturer instructions.
- Extinguish pillar and taper candles when they burn to within two inches of the holder.



For more information about how to keep your home and family safe from fire, please contact your local fire department or :

The Vermont Division of FIRE SAFETY

OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL & STATE FIRE ACADEMY

Central Office Berlin 802-479-7561 **State Fire Academy Office** Pittsford 802-483-2755
Regional Offices Barre 802-479-4434 * Rutland 802-786-5867 * Springfield 802-885-8883 * Williston 802-879-2300
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