

Appliance Fire Safety

When a member of your community is killed in a home fire, it is important to let others know how they can prevent a similar tragedy. As you continue to report on the fire, the U.S. Fire Administration encourages you to remind your audience that many fire deaths and injuries are preventable.

More than 4,000 Americans die each year in fires and more than 20,000 are injured. Many of them might be alive today if they had only had the information they needed to avoid a disaster. The following life-saving tips could make a big difference to your audience. By incorporating them in your story now, while the moment is still fresh, you could help save a life.

Did you know?

- Eighty-two percent of all fire deaths occur in the home.
- Each year there are 24,300 residential appliance fires resulting in 100 deaths and 925 injuries.
- Some electrical fires are caused by electrical system failures and appliance defects. However, many more are caused by misuse, poor maintenance of electrical appliances, incorrectly installed wiring, and overloaded circuits and extension cords.
- Having a working smoke alarm reduces one's chance of dying in a fire by nearly a half.

Following these simple fire safety tips can boost survival rates dramatically. Please share them with your readers because knowledge is the best fire protection.

Appliance Safety Life-Saving Tips

- Place a smoke alarm on every level of your home and outside bedrooms. If you keep your bedroom doors closed, place a smoke alarm in each bedroom.
- Regularly inspect your extension cords for fraying and never use an extension cord as permanent wiring.
- Instead of a simple extension cord, get a UL-listed unit with built-in circuit breakers.
- Routinely check your wiring. Look for outlets that don't work, light switches that are hot to the touch and lights that flicker.
- Never overload outlets or extension cords.
- Immediately repair appliances or lamps that sputter or spark.
- Keep appliances away from wet areas, especially in the kitchen, bathroom, basement and garage.
- If an appliance has a three-prong plug, never force it into a two-slot outlet or extension cord.
- Don't let children play near electrical space heaters. Keep clothes, curtains and other flammable items at least three feet away from heaters.
- Prepare and practice a home fire escape plan.
- In case of a fire, crawl or stay low to the ground, beneath the smoke.

For more information on the U.S. Fire Administration's Public Education Campaigns or to speak with a USFA spokesperson, please call 202-842-3600. Also visit <http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/> or <http://www.firesafety.gov/> for additional information on fire safety.