

Preventing house fires



Keep your home and family safe

It doesn't take much to spark an accidental house fire. In fact, some of the most common causes of house fires include:

- » Overcharging batteries
- » Overloading powerpoints and powerboards
- » Unattended cooking
- » Open flames including fireplaces, candles and cigarettes
- » Appliances especially heaters and electric blankets
- » Curious children playing with matches or lighters

Did you know?

- » You can't smell smoke in your sleep so it's important that you have working smoke alarms to alert you
- » The speed and ferocity of a house fire can engulf a room in less than five minutes
- » Electrical appliances and faults are a leading cause of house fires

Sources: Department of Fire and Emergency Services.

How to prevent a house fire

Follow these simple tips to help keep your home and family safe throughout the year:

- » **Take action.** Test your smoke alarms every month. Mark a memorable date in your diary and change the batteries once a year.
- » **Be prepared.** Buy a fire blanket or extinguisher that meets Australian Standards. Keep them somewhere that's easy to access but also away from potential fire hazards.
- » **Heat and cool your home safely.** Check your fireplace brickwork, chimney and flue for built up dust, soot or ash before lighting a fire. Have your air-conditioner serviced every year to keep it in great condition.
- » **Be extra careful with open flames.** Make sure that you leave adequate clear space around your fireplace and candles to avoid any items catching fire.
- » **Cook with care.** Never leave cooking unattended; turn off the stove or bbq before you leave the area. Be sure to keep your oven, range hood and grill clean as a build up of grease or fat can ignite.
- » **Consider electrical safety.** Use a licensed contractor to install, repair and check any kind of electrical component or appliance. Don't overload powerboards, extension leads or adapters and provide adequate ventilation around them.
- » **Charge safely.** Rechargeable batteries especially lithium-ion can quickly ignite. You should only use chargers that have been approved for use with that device and always remove devices once they're fully charged. Never leave devices charging overnight or out of sight e.g in the garage.
- » **Have a plan.** Develop and practice a fire safety plan and make sure everyone in the household knows what to do if there is a fire including evacuating and calling 000.



For the better



Do you have the right level of home insurance cover?

It's a good idea to review your building and contents insurance regularly to make sure you have the right level of cover to suit your needs.

Accidents can happen, even when you do everything you can to keep your home safe. Having the right level of insurance will give you peace of mind should you need to replace your contents or rebuild your home after an accidental fire.

Find out more

To learn more about preventing fires at home, contact the Department of Fire & Emergency Services (DFES) on 9395 9300 or visit dfes.wa.gov.au

For information on electrical safety at home visit westernpower.com.au



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