

HOME SAFETY

Thanks to the Home Safety Council – and other similar organizations that alert the public about safety – there is an abundance of information available from them about the obvious and hidden dangers that might cause injury in your home. For additional information, visit their website at www.homesafetycouncil.org or www.mysafehome.org.

There are several factors to consider when evaluating the safety of your home. The following list provides an incomplete list to help homeowners find and repair potential hazards in the home. For additional information on how to protect your home and family, visit the Home Safety Council's website.

General Safety Tips

- _____ Do you have a first-aid kit stocked with emergency items?
- _____ Do you practice a home fire escape plan twice a year so everyone in your family knows at least two exits out of every room and where to meet outside in case of an emergency?
- _____ Do you always stay in the kitchen when food is cooking on the stove?
- _____ Do you test your smoke alarms once a month to make sure they are working, and replace the batteries every year?
- _____ Have you installed smoke alarms on every level of your home and near every sleeping area?
- _____ If you have fire escape ladders, have you opened them safely from a ground-floor window for practice?
- _____ Are all stairs and steps free from clutter, well lit and protected with a secure banister or hand-rail?
- _____ Do you keep all paths and walkways clear of clutter and well lit?
- _____ Do you use nightlights to help light hallways and bathrooms during night-time hours?
- _____ Have you installed grab bars in bath and shower stalls and do you use a non-slip mat or have adhesive safety strips or decals inside bathtubs and showers?
- _____ Do you use rug-liners with all bath mats and rugs, or do they have a non-skid back?
- _____ Do you use a sturdy step stool (and not a chair) when climbing?
- _____ Have you installed a UL-listed carbon monoxide (CO) alarm in the hallway near bedrooms in your home?
- _____ Have you posted the National Poison Control Hotline number (1-800-222-1222) along with other emergency numbers next to every phone in your home?
- _____ Are caustic items (products that can burn your skin such as oven cleaners and rust remover) as well as all potential poisons kept in their original and labeled containers?
- _____ Do dangerous products, including cleaning products, medications and chemicals, have child-resistant caps and kept away from food?
- _____ Have you flushed unknown and out-of-date medicines down the toilet?
- _____ Are medicines kept in their original containers with the original labels?
- _____ Do you keep track of medication doses and always follow doctor's instructions?

- _____ Do older adults in your home exercise often to help improve balance and strength?
- _____ Do you constantly supervise children in or near water, such as pools, ponds, bathtubs, buckets, etc.?
- _____ Do you keep your water heater setting at 120 degrees Fahrenheit or less?
- _____ Do you store gasoline in a locked garage or shed, out of the reach of children, and always in a container made for gasoline?
- _____ Are you careful to only use gasoline as a motor fuel and to never bring gasoline indoors, even in small amounts?
- _____ Are you careful to never use a barbecue grill or generator in your garage?
- _____ Do you always pull the car out of the garage after starting it?
- _____ Have you moved objects, such as tires and gardening tools that are leaning against walls?
- _____ Do you store tools, gardening supplies and automotive parts in a secure cabinet or high shelf out of reach of children?
- _____ Are all matches and lighters stored in a locked cabinet?
- _____ Does your child stay at least three feet away from the stove/range at all times?
- _____ Do you keep all pot handles turned away from the edge of the stove/range?
- _____ Have you installed child safety locks on cabinets where hazardous products and medications are stored?
- _____ Are dangerous household items, such as medicines, toxic bleaches, oven and drain cleaners, paint solvents, polishes, and waxes, stored safely in a locked cabinet and out of reach of children?
- _____ Do you lock up all outside chemicals, especially pesticides, fertilizers and automotive fluids?
- _____ Have you installed baby gates at the top and bottom of stairwells?
- _____ Do you keep all plastic wrapping, such as dry-cleaning bags, produce bags and trash bags, away from children?
- _____ Are you careful not to hang pictures, quilts or decorations with ribbon or string on or over a crib?
- _____ Have you checked to make sure blind cords are not dangling low off windows and do not hang in a loop?
- _____ Have you placed furniture, including cribs and playpens and beds, away from windows?
- _____ Have you installed window guards with an emergency release to prevent young children from falling out of upper windows?
- _____ Have your older children memorized 9-1-1 or your street address and phone number?
- _____ Are electrical outlets covered with safety caps?
- _____ Have you checked nursery furniture to be sure they are strong and secure?
- _____ Have you carefully checked toys and pacifiers and removed those with small or broken parts that could be lodged in a child's throat, ears or nose?
- _____ Do you keep small items such as jewelry, buttons, safety pins, coins and small batteries away from children?
- _____ Have you checked the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission website at www.cpsc.gov to find out if your crib, toys or other home items have been recalled?

- _____ Do you practice "touch supervision" - keeping children within an arm's reach -- around any standing water such as pools, ponds, bathtubs, buckets, etc?
- _____ Do you test the temperature of your child's bath water to make sure it is below 120 degrees Fahrenheit?
- _____ Do you have a trained expert inspect, clean and tune-up your central heating system before the heating season each year?
- _____ Have you checked to be sure that all fuel-burning appliances (such as a furnace or space heater) are UL-listed?
- _____ Do you have an expert sweep and inspect your chimneys once a year and clean them if needed?
- _____ Are you careful to follow product instructions and only use fuel with the correct appliances?
- _____ Do you always use kerosene and gas heaters with ventilation (such as an open window) and only re-fuel heaters outdoors after it has cooled?
- _____ Do you always open flues before using your fireplace?
- _____ Do you keep things that can burn away from your fireplace and keep a glass or metal screen in front of your fireplace?
- _____ Do you constantly supervise children around all types of heating equipment and keep children away from fireplaces?
- _____ Are you careful to never burn trash or paper in your fireplace?