

Preventing Fire Damage *Outside the Home*



A fire outside can threaten your home in three ways: direct flame contact, radiant heat and flying embers. Obviously, direct flame contact is when fire directly threatens a structure, but radiant heat from a nearby fire can cause vinyl siding and window frames to melt, among other damage. Even if the fire is not affecting your home, flying embers are the most common way wildfires and local brush fires spread to homes, particularly into drain gutters, vents, eaves and roofing products. For example, the Humboldt fire covered 23,344 acres; 94 dwellings and buildings destroyed; 104 vehicles destroyed; 167 outbuildings burned. However, 90 dwellings were saved by local firefighters within the fire perimeter by being aware of the threats from indirect fire exposure.

Protect Against Flying Embers

- Remove pine needles and dead leaves from roofs, gutters, decks, and under stairs.
- Remove dead vegetation from landscaping immediately adjacent to your home. This includes the leaves and pine needles that get caught in landscaping as well as the dead and dying leaves and limbs of the landscaping itself.
- Place lawn furniture, wooden handles and other flammables away from the home's siding.
- Assess attic screens and vents for leaves and debris.
- Move BBQ's, lawnmowers, motorcycles and gas cans away from all structures.
- CAL Fire recommends 100' of defensible space around the home.

Make Sure the Family is Prepared

1. Make copies of all important papers and store them in a Safety Deposit Box or Fire Safe Box.
2. Take video and pictures of each room and special items, put it on a CD-ROM for Insurance purposes.
3. Know precisely where your most important possessions are.
4. Post the emergency numbers! Review how to use 911.
5. Plan an escape route. Have 2 ways to escape from upstairs.
6. Home Fire Drills. Test the process. Practice makes perfect!
7. Have a "physical" meeting place outside of the home, far enough away to be safe. Also be sure to make a "virtual" place to meet using E-mail and Internet.
8. Get Out and Stay Out! Never go back into a burning structure!

You can expand on this Fire Emergency Readiness by including the whole family into the plan and develop it with everyone's input.

Helpful WEB Sites & Numbers

Visit your local county/city online information regarding fire safety.

www.iicrc.org

www.cleanrite-buildrite.com

www.firepreventionofficers.org

www.sparky.or

www.seniors.tcnet.org/articles.html

www.fire.ca.gov

www.usfa.dhs.gov/kids/flash.shtm

Some Tips to Protect Your Home

1. **Eaves** – the eaves of a home act as a heat trap for hot air and gases, greatly increasing the chance of ignition. Covering the underside of the eaves with a "soffit", or "boxing" allows the heat to escape.
2. **Vents** – the vents in a home are high entry points for flying embers. All vent openings need to be covered with wire mesh that has at least 1/8 inch or smaller holes in the mesh. Do not use fiberglass or plastic mesh, it will melt.
3. **Chimneys** – chimney and stovepipe openings should be screened with one inch or smaller wire mesh or an approved spark arrestor cap. Have your chimney and or stovepipe cleaned by a professional chimney-sweep regularly, depending on usage. If you have recently purchased the home it would be wise to have this done, especially if it is an older home.
4. **Firewood stacks** – people frequently miss this: DO NOT stack the wood up against the home. It should be at least 30 feet from the house. Do not stack it "uphill" from the home where it could roll into the home if caught on fire. If you do not want to walk to the pile each time then always take a few logs and have them in the garage drying out or on a back porch and ready for home use. Always store away from flammable materials or flame.
5. **Decks** – make sure your deck's underside is enclosed with a fire-resistant material. You can also enclose it with 1/8" wire mesh to keep it free from easily combustible materials.

The months of June to October are "Fire Season Months."

The months of November to May have less fire danger.

We're Local! Call today and visit us on the web at: www.cleanrite-buildrite.com

Redding: 19690 N. Hirsch, Ste. 1, Anderson, CA 96007 (530) 246-4886
Yuba City: 350 Bridge St, Ste. A, Yuba City, CA 95991 (530) 742-5024

Chico: 1200 W. East Avenue, Chico, CA 95926 (530) 891-0333
Sacramento: 5430 Florin Perkins Rd, Ste 200, 95826 (916) 381-1321

1-800-870-0030



SERVING CHICO, REDDING, YUBA CITY, SACRAMENTO AND SURROUNDING AREAS



Preventing Fire Damage *Inside the Home*



Inside the home, the greatest dangers are in your kitchen and your fireplace. There are on average 114,000 reported home fires associated with cooking equipment every year, resulting in an annual 290 deaths and 4,380 injuries. Unattended cooking is the leading cause of kitchen fires with 3 in 10 reported home fires starting in the kitchen, more than any other place in the home. 2 out of 3 reported kitchen fires start with the range or stove. It is very important for you and for those you love to be responsible and prepared when using heat and fire in the home. **MAINTAIN FIRE EXTINGUISHERS AND SMOKE DETECTORS THROUGHOUT THE HOME.**

Cooking Safety is Always Important

- Unattended cooking is the leading cause of kitchen fires. Always stay in the kitchen when food is cooking on the stove.
- Keep stove tops and counters clean and uncluttered, free of any flammable objects and any "greasy" build up.
- Have pot holders or a high temperature-safe product within easy reach of the stove to handle hot items.
- Keep pot handles turned inward from any walkway to prevent them from being bumped.
- Do not cook or be near the stove with loose clothing.
- Keep a "kids-free safe zone" of three feet around the stove
- Never leave cooking oil on the stove top unattended.
- Never throw water on a pan fire! Cover with a lid!

Wood Burning Stoves and Fireplaces

- Have your chimney or wood stove flume checked regularly for a buildup of CREOSOTE. This is the oily black tar that collects inside of a chimney or flume that can ignite.
- Burn only seasoned hardwoods: elm, oak and maple.
- Never burn wood that has been treated with preservatives or painted, or color-printed papers. They all release toxins.
- Always, ALWAYS check the damper before lighting a fire.
- Make sure you have proper ventilation to prevent "back draft". This can occur when the pressure inside the home is less than the air pressure outside.
- Always confirm ashes are completely cooled before dumping.
- Don't ever burn charcoal in your home. It will produce carbon monoxide that can poison you.
- Maintain a proper grate or screen across the front of all fireplace or wood stove openings.
- Install a chimney cap to keep debris and small animals out of the chimney.

Smoke Damage

Smoke damage can be severe to physical property. A small fire can create volumes of smoke damage within a structure, and depending on what is burned in the fire, poisonous gases can be released within the smoke and air flow of the structure.

1. You may be anxious to clean your home after a fire, BUT FIRST contact your insurance agency and Cleanrite-Buildrite so that we can effectively assess the damage. We can begin the process of helping you to restore your property correctly.
2. Make sure that you have permission from the fire marshal that it is safe to re-enter your home or business. If you must enter the structure, wear a protective device over your mouth and nose to prevent inhaling any toxins left by the fire.
3. Don't attempt to clean any household textiles, carpets, upholstered furniture or draperies because you will likely cause additional and possibly irreparable damage. Smoke is oily and requires cleaning in a very specific way.
4. Change the furnace filter (if operating) at least once a day until the filter shows no soot.
5. Smoke odor can remain in clothing, furniture, carpets and draperies after any retail spray or perfume evaporates unless it is properly deodorized by a highly-effective Ozone Treatment.
6. Smoke will enter and remain in and between the walls of the living space. If it is not properly removed, the smoke odor will reoccur, particularly during damp periods.
7. To prevent additional soiling, cover clean items with plastic while further repairs are being carried out in the dwelling.
8. Carpets should be cleaned by a professional carpet cleaner. Sometimes the carpet will need to be cleaned twice or replaced.
9. Do not attempt to wipe down the walls. Professionals can use specific "chemical sponges" that effectively clean smoke and soot from different surfaces, saving money and mitigating further damage.

Helpful WEB Sites & Numbers

Poison Prevention Information 1-800-222-1222
www.firewise.org www.cleanrite-buildrite.com

www.befiresmart.com
www.nfpa.org

www.firesafecouncil.org
www.usfa.dhs.gov

www.threerivers.redcross.org

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