

Smoking is the number one cause of preventable home fire deaths across the country. If you smoke or live with someone who smokes, learn the facts.

IT WON'T HAPPEN TO ME

Every year, smokers are killed in home fires caused by smoking materials like cigarettes, cigars and pipes. A lit cigarette accidentally dropped onto a chair or bed can cause a large fire in seconds.

MY FAMILY COMES FIRST

Home fires caused by smoking materials have killed others living in the same home who were not smoking. If you live with a smoker, learn how you can help prevent fires caused by smoking materials.

IT ONLY TAKES SECONDS

Putting out a cigarette the right way only takes seconds. It is up to you to make sure your cigarette is put out, all the way, every time.



The U.S. Fire Administration is a division of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and is part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.



Smoking and Home Fires

How you can prevent home fires caused by smoking



FEMA

Your life can change in minutes.



10:45:00 PM

Three minutes ago,
a cigarette fell on
this chair.

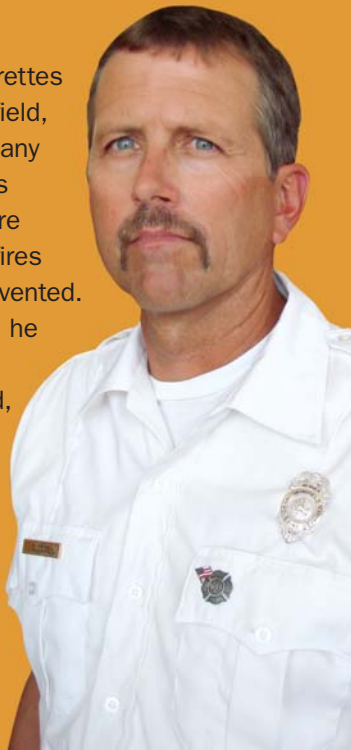


10:46:30 PM

Only 90 seconds
later, the entire
room is on fire.

Three Deaths, Three Weeks — One Reason

Home fires started by cigarettes took three lives in the Winfield, Maryland area in just as many weeks. This is tragic, says Greg Dods of the area's fire department, because the fires could have easily been prevented. Fires caused by cigarettes, he explains, often start on or next to the victim — in bed, on a sofa or in the trash. Firefighters, like Dods, urge smokers in every community to put their cigarettes out, all the way, every time.



I'm a smoker or live with a smoker. What can I do to make sure our home is safe from fires caused by smoking materials?

- The safest place to smoke is outside of the home. Use a sturdy ashtray or a can filled with sand to collect ashes.
- Use ashtrays with a wide, stable base that are hard to tip over. If it wobbles, it won't work.
- Ashtrays should be set on something sturdy and hard to ignite, like a table.
- **Put It Out. All the Way. Every Time.** The cigarette really needs to be completely stubbed out in the ashtray.
- Soak cigarette butts and ashes in water before throwing them away. NEVER toss hot cigarette butts or ashes in the trash.
- Chairs and sofas catch on fire fast and burn fast. Don't put ashtrays on them. If people have been smoking in the home, check for cigarettes under cushions.



- NEVER smoke while using oxygen or anywhere near an oxygen source, even if the source is turned off. Oxygen makes any fire burn hotter and faster.
- If you smoke, use reduced ignition strength cigarettes, commonly referred to as "fire-safe cigarettes."
- If you are drowsy or falling asleep, put it out. Smoking in bed is just plain wrong.
- Place working smoke alarms on the ceiling of every level of your home.
- Get a smoke alarm that can sound fast for both a fire that has flames, and a smoky fire that has fumes without flames. They are called "Dual Sensor Smoke Alarms."
- Have an escape plan and practice it. Plan two ways to escape from every room. Practice the escape plan at least twice a year.