



WINTER FIRE SAFETY

WITH WINTER ALMOST UPON US, FIRE AND RESCUE NSW IS URGING ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO TAKE EVERY PRECAUTION TO AVOID A FIRE IN THE HOME.

QUICK CHECKLIST

STAY SAFE THIS WINTER

There are a number of steps you can take to prepare your home against the risk of fire this winter:

- ✓ Ensure you have working smoke alarms in hallways, bedrooms and living areas.
- ✓ Always 'keep looking when cooking' to avoid kitchen fire catastrophes
- ✓ Turn off heaters and electric blankets before leaving home or getting into bed
- ✓ Keep everything in the house 'a metre from the heater'
- ✓ Make sure heaters and their cords are not a trip hazard
- ✓ Clean lint filters in the clothes dryer before or after each use
- ✓ Don't overload powerboards
- ✓ Keep candles away from curtains and put them out before leaving the room
- ✓ Never ever smoke in bed
- ✓ Place screens in front of open fires
- ✓ Have an escape plan in case of fire and practice it regularly
- ✓ Know two safe and clear ways out of every room in your home
- ✓ Make sure keys to all locked doors are readily accessible
- ✓ Don't fight the fire - get out and stay out and dial '000' immediately

WHEAT BAGS

Wheat bags can help pain, but they also have the potential to cause burns and even fire if improperly used. Fire and Rescue NSW firefighters have responded to numerous residential fires that have occurred due to wheat bags overheating in the microwave oven or wheat bags being used to warm bedding materials.



HOT TIPS

- Only use wheat bags for direct application to body aches and pains. Wheat bags can ignite, and are not designed to replace hot water bottles for warming beds.
- Regularly check your wheat bag for signs of wear and tear or scorching. With age the fillings dry out and become combustible.



Keep **LOOKING** when **COOKING**





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SMOKE ALARMS

Did you know that you cannot smell smoke from a fire when you are asleep? Only working smoke alarms help save lives.

Your local Fire and Rescue NSW fire station can install a 10-year battery-operated smoke alarm and provide fire safety tips at no cost?

You are eligible for this service if you are aged over 65 years and need support in your home, or if:

- You have a disability
- You are a pensioner receiving support to continue living in your home

For more information contact your local Fire and Rescue NSW fire station, or Fire and Rescue NSW's Community Engagement Unit on 1800 151 614.

Choosing your smoke alarm

By law, every level of all residential buildings must have at least one working smoke alarm. Fire and Rescue NSW recommends also having working smoke alarms in bedrooms and living areas.

Your local Fire and Rescue NSW station can give you advice on which alarm is best suited to you

Be prepared

- Test your smoke alarm every month by pressing and holding the test button for five seconds
- Maintain your smoke alarm by vacuuming every six months
- Replace batteries annually or when required.
- Replace alarms every ten years
- Ask for help with this if you need it
- Make sure you are familiar with the quickest way out of your home if a fire breaks out

In case of a fire

- Once you get out, stay out. Never go back inside a burning home
- Call Triple Zero (000) from your mobile phone or a neighbour's house

COOKING AT HOME

Kitchen fires account for 45 per cent of all residential fires and 34 per cent of injuries in NSW. Flames or heat sources being left unattended are the most common cause of kitchen fires. It can take just three minutes for a fire to take hold, but only seconds to prevent one.

Remember the following safety rules:

- Never leave cooking unattended. Stay in the kitchen while cooking and turn off the stove before you leave
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach of any children who might come to visit
- There are many dangerous substances in the kitchen. Flammable materials such as aerosols, cleaning agents and cooking oils should be stored away from heat
- Keep loose clothing, fabrics, tea towels, curtains and flammable items away from the stove
- Turn pot handles inwards. Pot handles hanging over the edge of the stove can be easily knocked
- Keep your oven, rangehood and grill clean and in good working order. A build-up of grease and fat can start a fire. If you need help with cleaning in your kitchen speak to your service provider

NOTE

If you are unable to cook for yourself, having meals delivered is a good option. Or you might like to consider attending a community restaurant for a centre-based meal. This is also a great way to meet up with new people. For more information contact NSW Meals on Wheel Association Inc. Phone (02) 8219 4200 www.nswmealsonwheels.org.au



If you have any questions about your safety please contact your service provider.

For more information, visit our website www.fire.nsw.gov.au

