

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD. FIRE / EMS DEPARTMENT

TIPsheet

SAFE HOME INSPECTION



NEED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION? PLEASE CONTACT THE PGFD/EMS
COMMUNITY OUTREACH OFFICE AT 301-883-5250



The Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department is committed to ensure that our county residents are made safe within their homes. We have attached a working check sheet that you can follow monthly so that you can find those issues and resolve them quickly before a fire begins.

SAFE HOME FIRE INSPECTION: *The importance of having a fire inspection is not to find you at fault but to help you seek out those hidden hazards that are in your home.*

We look at the following:

- Kitchen
- Furnace
- Hot Water Heater
- Circuit Panel
- Smoke Alarms
- Carbon Monoxide Alarms
- Exterior Issues
- Doors/Windows for Egress
- Life Safety Issues – In and around the home

To have your home inspected you can contact the Community Risk Reduction and Outreach Office to schedule a time that it can be performed.

Community Risk Reduction and Outreach
Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department
6820 Webster Street,
Landover Hills, Maryland 20784
Contact Phone: 301-583-1964
Email: tacrisman@co.pg.md.us



The following are key areas and concerns that we will address during a Home Fire Safety Inspection.



EXTERIOR:

- Make house numbers visible from the street.
- Trim trees away from windows
- If trees are close to power lines please have a certified professional remove the trees from electrical lines.

KITCHEN:

- **NEVER LEAVE COOKING UNINTENDED**
- Kitchen Stove/Oven – Clear of any buildup of cooking residue. Every time the stove/oven is used it should be wiped down of any build up. If this is not done it can lead to a fire. This is very important.
- Hood vent – it is very important that the vent be cleaned every month. Grease and buildup will lead to not allowing the vent to work properly.
- Keep a 3 foot safety zone around the stove/oven.
- Turn pots and pan handle to the side.
- Kitchen Appliances – should be unplugged when not in use. Inspect their cords regularly to ensure that they are working property. If they start to show signs of wear please discontinue their use and upgrade to a safer model.
- Rugs that are in the kitchen should be inspected for wear. Rugs can lead to slipping hazards if they are not maintained properly. If you don't feel comfortable walking on them and you feel like you might trip and fall it is recommended that you remove them or opt for a rug that will lie securely to the floor.
- DO you have two ways out of the kitchen in case of an emergency?
- Fire Extinguisher: Do you and your family know the proper procedures on how to use them. Is it mounted properly? Do you know **PASS – PULL – AIM – SQUEEZE – SWEEP!**
- Cleaning Products: Please keep them labeled and clearly away from little hands.
- Poison Safety Number: 1/800/222/1222

SMOKE ALARMS:

- Is there at least one smoke alarm (Tested) (UPGRADE to newer alarm)
- Does the family understand the sound of a smoke alarm
- Are the smoke alarms tested monthly (REMINDER ... Test every month)
- If 9volt Battery smoke alarm is still in use are the batteries being changed? Request to upgrade to 10 year sealed battery smoke alarm. ALL SMOKE ALARMS MUST BE CHANGED AFTER 10 YEARS.
- We recommend that you upgrade to a smoke alarm on each floor and one on the sleeping area and we now request you install a smoke alarm where you sleep.

CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS:

- If you have a carbon producing based product **Gas Appliances** or **Wood Burning Fire Place** or a **Car Port/Garage attached to your home** it is County and State Code that you have a working Carbon Monoxide Alarm in your home. Please follow the full manufactures rules and recommendations when installing these alarms. They must be replaced every 7 years.

CIRCUIT PANEL/ FURNACE / HOT WATER HEATER / DRYER VENTS:

- *It is highly recommended that you have your furnace and hot water heater inspected yearly by a certified professional.*
- Once a month we request that you inspect your circuit panel, furnace and hot water heater to ensure that they are working properly.
- If your circuit panel door hot: If it is hot you have a problem. You need to address this right away. Call a certified professional to have it inspected.
- Make sure you can clearly read the panels markings. You need to be able to read it. Does not use pencil use a permanent ink?
- We request that you change your filters every month. This will ensure that the units are running properly.
- Clothes Dryer must be inspected every month and required after every use is to clear the lint trap. Lint is very combustibile if not cleaned out. This will also help with the dryer working properly. It is very important. We run many calls for fires that are related to not clearing out the lint trap.

HOME ESCAPE PLANS:

- Does your family have a posted fire escape plan that shows escape routes and exits of the home?
- Does your family know two ways out of every room?

- Does your family know how to call 911 in an emergency, if you have guest staying do they know the address and safe places that your family would go and meet at in case of an emergency.
- Does your family conduct regular exit drills? Always use a smoke alarm to simulate the drill.
- Windows and doors should operate normally at all times. Check the windows to ensure that they can open and open to their widest point. Newer windows are created to give a bigger egress option. This need to be practiced and everyone feeling confident in their usage.
- Smoking materials should be stored properly and discarded in a safe container that can accept hot ashes. Do not discard any smoke materials in a trash can. They can reignite and can lead to a fire.
- If your home has a fire place it is also very important to discard hot ash in a metal can.

ELECTRICAL & APPLIANCE SAFETY:

- Electrical cords do not run under rugs.
- Electrical cords are not frayed or cracked.
- Circuit-protected, multi-prong adapters are used for additional outlets.
- Large and small appliances are plugged directly into wall outlets.

HEATING SAFETY:

- Chimney and furnace are cleaned and inspected yearly.
- Furniture and other items that can catch fire are at least 3 feet from fireplaces, wall heaters, baseboards, and space heaters.
- Fireplace and barbecue ashes are placed outdoors in a covered metal container at least 3 feet from anything that can catch fire.
- Extension cords are never used with space heaters.
- Heaters are approved by a national testing laboratory and have tip-over shut-off function.

REMEMBER

**EVERY month you need to inspect your home.
Every 6 months inspect for the season change.
Follow the 1st of the Month Rule.**