

FIRE PREVENTION






INFORMATION AND RESOURCES ON THE DANGERS OF FIRE

Fire is a leading cause of non-occupational fatalities and is the fifth largest cause of accidental deaths in the home after poisoning, falls, choking and drowning, leading to about 3,000 deaths per year across the US¹.

The primary regulations for home fire prevention during construction are found in the NYS Building Codes. The portion of the code that deals with fire prevention for new homes is the Residential Code. This code references others that directly address building fire prevention and detection like the Fire, Electrical, Fuel Gas and Mechanical Codes. Any upgrades to your home should be done as specified by the applicable codes. For older buildings, the existing building code and property maintenance code apply.

The Existing Building Code requires all building systems to be maintained in original operating condition and continue to be usable until they present a hazard to life, health or property. It also instructs building owners when changes to the building requires a portion of it (like the electrical, plumbing or heating system) to be brought up to the current code requirements. The property maintenance code tells how buildings must be maintained so they do not become, amongst other things, a potential fire hazard. The Property Maintenance code tells how buildings must be maintained with specific sections dealing with heating, mechanical, electrical and fire safety requirements. Essentially it requires all devices and equipment in a house to be properly installed, repaired and replaced when deterioration or damage has caused them to present a fire or another hazard. It also requires that the building's fire protective structures be maintained, that fire detection and alarm systems are kept operational, and that the ways to escape the building are kept clear.

Classes of Fire Extinguishers

	Ordinary Combustibles	Wood, Paper Cloth
	Flammable Liquids	Grease, Oil, Paint, Solvents
	Live Electrical Equipment	Electrical Panel, Motor, Wiring
	Combustible Metal	Magnesium, Aluminum
	Commercial Cooking Equipment	Cooking Oils, Animal Fat, Vegetable Oils

Always call 9-1-1 before attempting to fight a fire. Be sure you have the correct extinguisher for the material that is burning.

¹The National Safety Council's 2015 Accident Facts Book

PREVENTION

- Maintain your home systems (electrical, heating, fire barriers) in the way they were originally installed and make any updates per the current code requirements.
- Have heating systems (fireplaces, wood stoves, furnaces, boilers, hot water heaters, etc.) inspected and serviced at least annually by a qualified technician.
- Place and use portable heaters per the manufacturer's instructions.
- If you smoke, go outdoors. If done indoors, use a stable ash tray, do not smoke on furniture with combustible coverings and never in bed or when tired. Dispose of ashes in a fire resistant (metal) container. Store smoking materials, especially matches and lighters, where children cannot get them.
- If candles or lanterns are used, place them on a stable surface and continuously monitor their use.
- If a circuit breaker or ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) trips for no apparent reason, discontinue use of the circuit until the cause of the fault is determined and repaired.
- Do not overload electrical outlets. If they feel or smell, warm remove the equipment connected to them and have them repaired if they are damaged.
- Use properly sized light bulbs in all lighting fixtures and lamps.
- Only use extension cords that are sized for the equipment being powered. If a cord feels warm replace it with one that has a higher electrical capacity (or smaller gauge wire). Destroy and replace any damaged cords.

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At CSEA, transforming knowledge into action is central to our mission of protecting workers. When hazards and close calls are documented and reported, they can be addressed before they cause harm. That's how we prevent injuries and illnesses—by making sure problems don't get ignored. Your voice and vigilance are essential. Now more than ever, we need your help to ensure every workplace is safe, healthy, and accountable.

THE LIFE YOU SAVE COULD BE YOUR OWN!