

# 11 Most Common Causes of House Fires

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 [utahfloodcleanup.com/11-most-common-causes-of-house-fires](https://utahfloodcleanup.com/11-most-common-causes-of-house-fires)



A beautiful well-built home can be quickly consumed in a blazing fire, due to any one of countless causes. That's the *bad* news. The *good* news is that house fires from the most common causes are almost all easily avoidable. From inappropriately managed flammable material storage to smoking in bed, the frequency of residential fires can be significantly reduced by an increased commitment to household fire prevention practices.

Here's some information from Utah Flood Cleanup, your local [disaster restoration company](#), about the most common causes of [house fires](#) and how to prevent them:

## 11 Most Frequent Causes of Home Fires

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Fire safety awareness should be a priority in *every* home. All members of the family need to understand the usual causes of home fires, and each person should be clear about their personal roles in fire prevention at home. Awareness-building should start with knowing which unsafe habits and/or conditions in the home are fire hazards. Here are some of the common causes of house fires, and some fire safety tips to take precautions:

### Cooking Errors

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FEMA reports a shocking [50.2%](#) of all residential fires are cooking-related (2019). People get a little distracted by peripheral conversations and activities and they sometimes let themselves be drawn away to other rooms. This drifting away from cooking to things happening in other areas of the house quite easily [leads to kitchen fires](#). Meanwhile, unattended pots and pans on burners overheat and a fire is ignited. Always stay near the heat source when cooking. Or, have someone watch the cooking for you if you need to step away for a few minutes.

## Portable Heaters

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Using space heaters less than three feet away from walls, furniture, drapes, clothing, or anything else in a house can cause a fire. In fact, about 5% of residential fires are attributable to use of built-in or portable heating equipment. Have portable heaters inspected annually, to ensure they are functioning in conformance with current residential fire safety standards.

## Electrical Appliances

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Small electrical appliances like coffee makers and toasters can be sources of home fires if they have frayed or otherwise faulty power cords. Around 6.9% of house fires are caused by such electrical appliances malfunctioning. An electrical outlet with too many high-energy consuming appliances plugged into double adapters is a serious fire hazard. Do not overuse electricity at an outlet or through an extension cord.

## Smoking in Bed

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More than 50% of deaths in house fires in homes start in bedrooms. The vast majority occurred late at night. That alarming percentage serves to alert everyone in the country of the life-and-death imperative of essential fire safety habits when it comes to managing smoking at home, especially at night. (See Utah Flood Cleanup's Checklist for Preventing Bedroom Fires.)

## Unattended Candles

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The lovely ambiance and aromas of great candles add much to the quality of hours spent relaxing at home. However, neglected candles are one of the leading causes of house fires. Set candles well away from drapes, tissues, lamps, books, bedding, clothing, walls, and other obviously flammable materials. Blow out candles before you leave the room, even for a minute.

## Overloaded Power Strips

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Having several power strips around the house to multiply outlets is often a necessity these days. But, power strips are hazardous when used inappropriately, or if they are malfunctioning. According to an ESFI report (2016), over 3,300 house fires originate at power strips and extension cords each year, and they injure hundreds of people. To reduce this very serious risk of residential fires, every occupant of your home should be well informed about fire safety requirements for using power strips in homes.

## Fire Safety in Your Home

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In addition to the *specific* tips offered above, here are a few *general* fire safety recommendations that all homeowners should follow, to help ensure optimum fire safety at home:

- *Fire Safety Inspection* — Nearly 7% of house fires were due to building electrical systems issues. Every home should have a thorough fire safety inspection of lighting fixtures, HVAC equipment and wiring, gas lines, fireplace chimneys, and other areas of potential risk.
- *Focus on Fire Safety* — About 7.7% of home fires were unintentionally caused by inattention to hazards, according to the FEMA report. Failure to focus on fire safety in everyday activities leads to many residential fires each year.
  - Focus on fire safety while handling or storing flammable liquids anywhere in the home, as this issue caused 3.8% of home fires, per FEMA.
  - Also, stay with the effort when tending open flames in fireplaces, barbeque grills, or fire pits.
  - Supervise children, to ensure against endangerment from playing with fire sources.

Further, in the event that there ever is a fire in your home, it is obviously critical to maintain sufficient homeowner insurance and to have *working smoke detectors* in all the appropriate locations in your home. If there is a malfunction of any electrical or gas-powered item in your home or a human error that results in a house fire, working smoke detectors are the critical early detection measures that help protect you and your family against a devastating property loss and even risk to lives.

## Utah Flood Cleanup

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We are a disaster restoration company serving cities throughout Utah. We specialize in flood and fire damage restoration services as well as mold removal and remediation. Our disaster restoration service is locally owned. We work directly for you, our customer, not your insurance company. That means we are not compelled to take any shortcuts to finish fire restoration or other reconstruction work too quickly.

We adhere to all ANSI IICRC S-500 and S-520 guidelines. We provide 24/7 emergency disaster cleanup services, with a 1-hour response time. We guarantee all our fire and smoke restoration and other damage repair work. Ask about our financing options.

Our professional disaster restoration team holds the highest disaster restoration industry certifications. Among the certifications we hold are: IICRC WTR, ASD, CDS, Certified Mold Professional, RRP Certification, and Asbestos Contractor/Supervisor, Asbestos Inspector Certification.

**Call Utah Flood Cleanup, Utah at (801) 416-2666 for more information or immediate help, or use our online contact request to schedule a FREE inspection of all damage covered by insurance.**

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