

7 Simple Tips for Preventing Fires in Your Home

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According to the National Fire Protection Association, an average of 358,000 house fires occur each year in the United States, resulting in thousands of deaths and injuries and billions of dollars of property damage.

Typically, residential fires are caused by open flames, accidents and cooking, and they primarily happen when people are home, which means they can be prevented through deliberate steps and precautions. Rather than having to seek [fire damage help](#) after an unfortunate or serious tragedy, be proactive about the ways you can prevent fires at home.

Here are seven simple steps homeowners in Utah can take to keep their house, apartment or condo safe and secure from incidental fires:

1. Keep an Eye on Your Cooking

About 50 percent of house fires are started in the kitchen before spreading to other rooms. To prevent fires in the kitchen, never leave food unattended while cooking, even for a brief period of time, and try to keep a fire extinguisher close by, if possible.

2. Clean Your Oven and Stove

Leftover food particles or spills that are left on burners or in the oven can occasionally lead to fires. Regularly remove debris and wipe down these spaces. You can help prevent fires from spreading by making sure no dish towels, cookbooks, or other flammable items are accidentally left on or by a burner while it's still hot.

3. Maintain Your Dryer

Filter buildup and blockages in dryer vents are also major culprits of house fires, as about 13,000 fires per year are related to your washer/dryer. Make sure you do regular maintenance of the dryer exhaust vents and keep your dryer filter clean.

4. Practice Candle Safety

More than 8,000 fires each year are related to candles in homes. If you're using candles with real flames, keep them clear of flammable materials, such as table decorations, shelves and walls. Keep an eye on candles when they're going and blow them out before you leave the room. You can also switch over to battery operated candles to help prevent house fires.

5. Inspect Your Wiring

Older homes or those with outdated wiring are particularly at risk of fire. If you are purchasing your old home or have been living in yours for several years, hire a certified electrician to check the wiring and make sure everything is up to date and in working order. Don't forget to look in out-of-sight areas, such as crawl spaces, basements, attics, and ventilation shafts. Make any necessary repairs to faulty or frayed wiring that could lead to a devastating house fire.

6. Regularly Test Smoke Alarms

Each level of your house and bedroom should have a working smoke detector. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, you should test your smoke alarms about once per month and change the batteries twice each year or whenever the beeping is weak when conducting a test. As for the smoke alarm device itself, you should replace it every 10 years.

7. Use Your Fireplace Safely

Another one of the ways to prevent fires at home is to let embers and ash completely cool down before disposing them after you've had a fire going. Smoldering embers that go unnoticed can cause fires long after the fire is out. Use a fireplace cover to keep sparks contained and never leave flammable objects in front of a burning fire. Also, be sure to have your chimney cleaned and inspected regularly.

Fire Damage Clean Up

Although prevention is key, accidental fires are still a possibility. When that happens, you want someone on your side to help you deal with fire damage clean up, salvage as many personal items as possible, and prepare your home to be used again. At Utah Flood Cleanup, we offer comprehensive restoration and repairs services to assess the damaged area and determine the best solution to return your home to normal.