

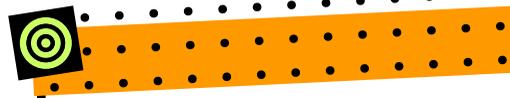
For additional information...

Contact your fire department or visit the *Ministère de la Sécurité publique* Web site at www.msp.gouv.qc.ca under the headings "Fire Safety" and "Education Material".



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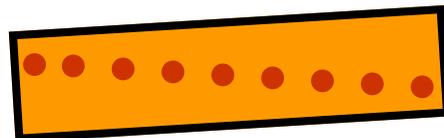
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MRC of Temiscamingue



Fire Prevention Guide



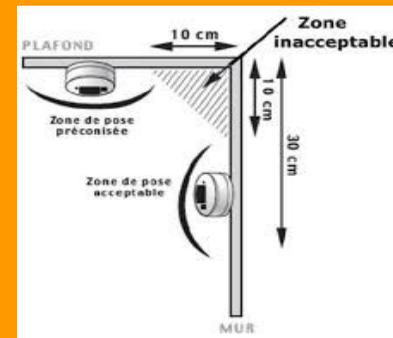
Fire Prevention Tips

Smoke Alarms...

How many smoke alarms should we have in our home and where should we install them?

It is mandatory to have one smoke alarm on every floor, in the hallways, near the bedrooms, including the basement. It is recommended to have one in the bedrooms when we sleep with the door shut. We mount them on the ceiling or on walls, 10 to 30 cm (4 to 12 inches) from the wall or the ceiling.

It allows the occupants to quickly exit the home before the smoke spreads. It saves lives, particularly when fires break out at the night.



How do we know if smoke alarms work properly?

Once a month, press the test button for a few seconds. The alarm should go off immediately. This is to ensure that the batterie is working. Blow out a candle to see if it can detect smoke. Perform this test once a year. If the smoke alarm is connected to an alarm communications centre, contact the centre and inform them of your test to make sure the fire department doesn't show up at your door.

What to do when the smoke alarm goes off too often?

It is possible that this smoke alarm is mounted too close to the kitchen or the bathroom, for example. Ventilate the area and mount the smoke alarm further away from the area. Never remove the battery.

When should we replace a smoke alarm?

Replace it every 10 years. You can rely on the lifespan identified on the smoke alarm cover. If your smoke alarm is damaged, dusty or does not emit a signal sound after the battery has been changed, replace it.

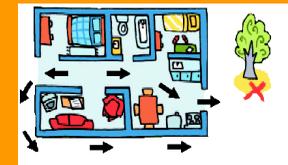
When should we change the battery in our smoke alarms?

Replace the battery when the smoke alarm emits intermittent signal sounds. These signals indicate that the battery is too weak. Take advantage of time changes, in the fall and spring, to check and replace your battery, as needed. Never install a rechargeable battery.

The golden rule

When your smoke alarm emits a continuous audible signal, exit the home immediately and call the fire department from a safe location by dialling 911. Make sure all occupants have indeed evacuated the housing or home.

Prepare, with your family and cotenants, a fire escape plan. Furthermore, assign an outside meeting place and never go back inside a burning building.



Carbon monoxide (CO₂)...

Important instructions



Carbon monoxide is an invisible, colourless, tasteless and non-irritating gas; therefore, it can be deadly if the home is not equipped with a CO₂ detector. A detector must be installed when a house is equipped with a combustion appliance or when a garage is attached to a house.

Symptoms vary according to the intensity of intoxication from a simple headache if poisoning is mild to a loss of consciousness if poisoning is severe.

Safety advice when smoke alarms are triggered...

Beware of the door to a room

When the door to a room is shut and the smoke alarm is triggered, touch the door with the back of your hand.



If the door is hot, do not open it. The fire is on the other side of the door. Put a piece of fabric at the foot of the door to prevent smoke from coming in the room. Then go to the window and put a piece of fabric in the window and wave it around, so the fire fighters know where you are.

However, if the door is cool, this means that you can open it and go to the nearest exit to join your family at the outside meeting place.

If there is smoke in the home

When there is smoke in the home, walk on all fours because the air is safer near the floor. During a fire, toxic and hot gases can accumulate on the ceiling and can reach temperatures of 1200 °C.



Campfires...

Important instructions

Make sure to choose an open area, sheltered from the wind and near water. If you are far from water, make sure to have something to quickly put out the fire. Keep an eye on the fire at all times and check the risk level from the *SOPFEU* before you light it up.



Cooking fires...

Important instructions

Your kitchen is a lab used to prepare delicious and original culinary experiments, but kitchen fires can quickly transform it into a fire zone. Kitchen fires are also the leading cause of burns sustained in a residential fire. The best protection is to be aware of potential dangers and to proactively manage them.



Kitchen fires can happen quickly and spread within seconds. Stay in the kitchen when you cook, especially if you are using fats and oils or if you are cooking at a high temperature.

Always have the appropriate lid within finger tip reach for each pot or pan. If the cookware catches fire, place the lid on the pot or pan to choke the flames. Don't try to move the cookware; you might fan the flames and spread the fire.

Do not put water on a fire that has been caused by fat, oil or grease.

Portable fire extinguishers...

Important instructions

A portable fire extinguisher must be checked and shaken twice a year, when the clock changes. It is recommended to have a 5-lb. ABC type portable fire extinguisher.



Wood heating...

Pay attention to creosote buildup

To reduce creosote buildup, use only dry wood. Creosote is a black oily residue that builds up when smoke rises in the chimney. Creosote is highly flammable.



Make sure the chimney has enough air for the wood to burn properly and to produce less creosote.



Regularly check the connecting pipes in the wood stove and the chimney because a 3 mm accumulation of creosote is enough to cause a fire.

To avoid creosote buildup, ask a specialist to sweep your chimney once a year.

Use your wood stove safely

Do not burn treated or painted wood, plastic or other waste. The released toxic products increase creosote deposits and can poison us.

Do not use gas or kerosene to start a fire.

Keep combustible materials away from the wood stove.

Storage of ashes

Regularly empty the ashes and put them in a metal container with a lid. Sparks from hot ashes can easily start a fire.



Store this container outside because the ashes can release carbon monoxide. Keep it away from the walls of the house or the shed; ashes can remain active up to 72 hours even up to 7 days.

Electrical panels...

Important instructions

Do not store anything in front of electrical panels. It is required to clear a space of 1 m (3 feet) in front of the panels.



Electrical outlets...

Important instructions

Use extension cords with an incorporated circuit breaker.



Do not use cord extension sets permanently, unplug them after each use.

Keep cord extension sets in plain sight. Avoid hiding them under rugs or behind furniture and avoid making them go through a wall or under a door.

Calling 911...



Important instructions

In Quebec, 911 is the number to call to obtain emergency services. Dial this number for emergencies only.

Take the time to answer all the questions in a calm and precise manner.

If you hear "911, stay on the line", do not hang up. This way you will keep your call priority.

If you dial 911 by accident, stay on the line and inform the operator that you have made a mistake.

Cigarette butts...

Important instructions



Never leave a burning cigarette, unattended, in an ashtray.

Use safe ashtrays. A cigarette should not tip out of the ashtray.

Never place an ashtray on an uneven surface such as the arm of a chair.

Never smoke in bed.

Always keep matches and lighters away from children's reach.

Never empty the contents of an ashtray in a trash can without completely wetting the cigarette butts beforehand.