

Christmas Tree Safety

Many families will begin to purchase and decorate Christmas trees this month. Partner with your local Christmas tree farms, Boy Scout groups, and retailers to spread the message about Christmas tree safety. Tree tags with fire safety tips are available from the SFMO free of charge.

National Fire Service History

- November 9, 1872 - Great Boston Fire (9 firefighter deaths)
- November 15, 1942 - Boston Wall Collapse (6 firefighter deaths)
- November 28, 1942 - Coconut Grove Nightclub Fire, Boston, MA (492 deaths)
- November 21, 1980 - MGM Grand Hotel Fire (85 deaths)
- November 29, 1988 - Kansas City Trailer Explosion (6 firefighter deaths)

Tennessee Specific History

- November 22, 1900 - Columbia Tornado (25 deaths)
- November 17, 1908 - Lookout Mt Inn Burned
- November 3, 2001 - Chattanooga Complex Fire Disaster
- November 14, 2001 - TN Ridge Crest Fire Disaster, Pigeon Forge
- November 28, 2016 - Great Smoky Mountains Wildfires, Sevier County (14 deaths)

NOVEMBER: WEEK 1—Smoke Alarms/“Close The Door!”

Overview: The “Close The Door!” campaign is unique to the SFMO and its goal is to encourage people to close the door whenever possible—whether they are going to bed at night or leaving the room in the event of a fire. Closing the door can stop the spread of fire in a home for hours at a time, leaving plenty of room to find alternate escape routes or shelter in place until help arrives. A door can be one of the best pieces of firefighting and lifesaving equipment.



The campaign works in conjunction with inter-connected smoke alarms, which are required in all new construction.

In 2019, the SFMO announced a partnership with Knox Box to help spread the “Close The Door!” message throughout the state. This partnership is a comprehensive campaign involving local fire departments aimed at educating local residents about the importance of doors in fire prevention.

Check out our new “Close The Door!” website here: <https://www.knoxhomebox.com/closethedoor>

Resources: The following resources are available, courtesy of the SFMO and Knox Box:

- Official “Close The Door!” website
 - <https://www.knoxhomebox.com/closethedoor>
- “Close The Door!” informational flyer
 - https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/commerce/documents/fire_prevention/posts/Close_the_Door_Flyers.pdf

Media Tools: Use the following pre-written media releases and social media posts in your efforts to spread the “Close The Door!” message:

- **Customizable press release**
 - https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/commerce/documents/fire_prevention/posts/Fire_Customizable_Press_Release.docx
- **Twitter:**
 - Did you know a door is one of the best pieces of firefighting equipment? Learn more here: <https://bit.ly/2x3WU5E> #closethedoorTN
 - Simply closing the door behind you when escaping a fire can be the best decision you make. <https://bit.ly/2x3WU5E> #closethedoorTN
 - Fire doors prevent spread of smoke/flames in apartments & other buildings. Never disable a fire door. <https://bit.ly/2x3WU5E> #closethedoorTN
 - Fire moves fast. A closed door may slow a fire & provide precious seconds needed for escape. <https://bit.ly/2x3WU5E> #closethedoorTN
 - Make sure to have smoke alarms in each bedroom and outside each room when you sleep with the door closed! #closethedoorTN

- **Facebook:**

- Did you know that a door is one of the best pieces of firefighting and life-saving equipment in a home? It can reduce fire growth and spread, limit damage to your home, and possibly saves lives. <https://bit.ly/2x3WU5E>
- Getting out of a burning building and calling 911 are crucial to survival during a fire, but closing doors during an escape can potentially limit the structural damage a fire can cause and possibly save lives. <https://bit.ly/2x3WU5E>
- Keep fire doors closed. These specialized doors are used to compartmentalize a building and prevent the spread of smoke and flames. Never wedge, disable, or prop open fire doors in apartments or other buildings. <https://bit.ly/2x3WU5E>
- Three simple words may save lives during a fire: “Close the door!” A closed door can reduce fire growth and spread, limit damage to your home, and possibly saves lives. <https://bit.ly/2x3WU5E>
- Make sure you have smoke alarms installed in each bedroom and outside each room when you sleep with your door closed. Interconnected alarms can save lives!

Educator Tip: Build your own “Close The Door!” display! A door display can be a very effective tool for publicizing the “Close The Door!” message in number of ways. It can be used during open houses and fire house visits, in-school visits, public safety expos, fairs, or at fundraising events. You can also use this door display as a photo op for local legislators and other leaders. Be sure to use the official “Close The Door!” prop banners and logos found at <https://www.knoxhomebox.com/closethedoor>.

NFPA Messaging:

Home Smoke Alarms

Installation

1.2.2.1 It is especially important to have interconnected smoke alarms if you sleep with doors closed.

People Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

1.4.1 Install smoke alarms and alert devices that meet the needs of people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

1.4.2.1 When people who are deaf are asleep, a pillow or bed shaker should be used to wake them and alert them to fire conditions so they can escape. This device is activated by the sound of a standard smoke alarm. People who are deaf may find that the shaker paired with a high-intensity strobe light is helpful to wake them.

Home Fire Escape

Planning

4.1.10 A closed door may slow the spread of smoke, heat, and fire.

4.1.12 If you sleep with the bedroom door closed, install smoke alarms inside and outside the bedroom. For the best protection, make sure all smoke alarms are interconnected. When one smoke alarm sounds, they all sound.

Practicing the Home Fire Escape Drill

4.2.4 Close doors behind you as you leave.

NOVEMBER: Week 2 – Electrical Hazards

Overview: Electricity helps make our lives easier but there are times when we can take its power and its potential for fire-related hazards for granted. In Tennessee, between 2010 and 2019, electrical malfunction accounted for 8.5% of all structure fires and 11.7% of all structure fire deaths. The dangers of electrical hazards are always present and common hazards include overloaded electrical outlets, arcing, and extension cords.

Resources: The following resources are available:

- Electrical safety tip sheet
 - http://www.nfpa.org/~media/files/public-education/resources/safety-tip-sheets/electrical_safety_tips.pdf
- “NFPA’s Electrical Safety PSA”
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l-wXyw0tvSA>
- “Electrical Safety Messages in American Sign Language”
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x_7RFiv7_lw



Media Tools: Use the following pre-written media releases and social media posts in your efforts to promote electrical safety:

- **Twitter**
 - Our favorite cartoon, Dan Doofus, learns the hard way all about electrical safety, so you don’t have to: <https://youtu.be/l-wXyw0tvSA>
 - The leading areas of origin for electrical fires are the bedroom (14%), attic (12%), and kitchen (11%) <http://ow.ly/ZOdOf>
 - Safety tip: avoid running extension cords across doorways or under carpets. <http://ow.ly/ZOfkE>
 - Safety tip: avoid overloading outlets. Plug only one high-wattage appliance into each receptacle outlet at a time. <http://ow.ly/ZOgc3>
- **Facebook**
 - Nearly one-third (31%) of home electrical fires began with ignition of wire or cable insulation. <http://ow.ly/ZOdOf> #FireFacts
 - Looking for an easy to read electrical safety checklist to use at home or in your community? Here’s one from #NFPA: <http://ow.ly/ZOdOf>
 - NFPA’s electrical fire safety messages can be viewed in American #SignLanguage with this video: https://youtu.be/x_7RFiv7_lw
 - For some good reminders, download & review @NFPA’s electrical fire safety tip sheet: <http://ow.ly/ZOgc3>

- Social Media share images:



Educator Tip: Organize in-home safety visits so your fire prevention team can identify any electrical hazards that may exist. These in-home safety visits can be crucial to preventing home fires. Use USFA's Home Safety Checklist as a guide when performing these visits. You can download a copy here:

- https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/home_safety_checklist.pdf

If you cannot schedule an in-home safety visit, encourage residents to check any extension cords or power strips for fraying or tearing. These potential hazards can arc at any moment and ignite nearby combustibles such as carpet, wallpaper, drapes, or other fabrics. Explain to residents the importance of checking for these hazards before a fire occurs.

NFPA Messaging:

Electrical

Inside the Home

12.1.10 Check electrical cords often. Replace cracked, damaged, and loose electrical or extension cords. Do not try to repair them.

12.1.11 Avoid putting cords where they can be damaged or pinched by furniture, under rugs and carpets, or across doorways.

12.1.13 Extension cords are for temporary use only. Have a qualified electrician determine if additional circuits or wall outlets are needed.

12.1.14 Replace wall outlets if plugs do not fit snugly or the wall outlet does not accept plugs with one blade larger than the other.

NOVEMBER: Week 3 – Cooking Safety – Turkey Fryers

Overview: On Thanksgiving Day, many families customarily spend the holiday inside their home or at the home of a friend or family member with the family dinner being the highlight of the day. Thanksgiving is the leading day for home fires involving cooking equipment, at three times the average number per day.

- An estimated 2,000 Thanksgiving Day fires in residential buildings are reported to U.S. fire departments each year and cause an estimated average of 5 deaths, 25 injuries, and \$21 million in property loss.
- Thanksgiving Day fires in residential buildings occur most frequently in the afternoon hours from noon to 4:00 p.m., peaking from noon to 1:00 p.m.

Air fryers are a safe alternative to oil fryers and taste just as good! Local restaurants and stores may also have fried turkeys available to purchase.

Resources: The following resources are available:

- Turkey fryer demonstration, presented by William Shatner & State Farm
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XVixbf-bubs>
- 15 turkey fryer safety tips
 - <https://www.statefarm.com/simple-insights/residence/15-turkey-fryer-safety-tips>
- Turkey fryer safety tips
 - <https://www.ifsa.org/sites/www.ifsa.org/files/assets/turkeyfryersafety.pdf>



Media Tools: Use the following pre-written media releases and social media posts in your efforts to promote safety with turkey fryers:

- **Twitter**
 - Never fry a frozen turkey! Always thaw your turkey if you are using a fryer. <http://bit.ly/2w21pLL>
 - Watch that bird! Never leave a turkey fryer unattended. <http://bit.ly/2w21pLL>
 - @NFPA discourages the use of turkey fryers, but if you must fry your turkey this holiday, follow these safety guidelines: <http://bit.ly/2w21pLL>
 - Keep all children and pets away from the turkey fryer at all times! <http://bit.ly/2w21pLL>
- **Facebook**
 - If you plan to deep-fry your holiday bird, be sure you know how to safely use the fryer, and take these precautions to protect yourself, your guests and your home: <http://bit.ly/2u0xdDc>
 - If you plan on frying a turkey this Thanksgiving, make sure to follow these key safety tips:
 - Place the fryer on a level surface and avoid moving it once it's in use.
 - Make sure the turkey is thawed and dry before cooking. Ice or water that mixes into the hot oil can cause flare-ups.
 - Never leave fryers unattended.

- Click here for more: <http://bit.ly/2u0xdDc>
- NFPA urges those who prefer fried turkey to look for grocery stores, specialty food retailers, and restaurants that sell deep fried turkeys, or consider a new type of “oil-less” turkey fryer. To find out more info, go here: <http://bit.ly/2w21pLL>

Educator Tip: Communicate to all residents that the NFPA and SFMO discourage the use of outdoor gas-fueled turkey fryers that immerse the turkey in hot oil. However, if frying your own turkey is an absolute necessity, the following safety measures should be carefully followed:

- Turkey fryers must always be used outdoors and a safe distance from buildings and other flammable materials.
- Never use turkey fryers indoors or on a wooden deck.
- Make sure the fryer is used on a flat surface to prevent accidental tipping.
- Never leave the fryer unattended. Most units do not have thermostat controls. If you do not watch the fryer carefully, the oil will continue to heat until it catches fire.
- Never let children or pets near the fryer, even if it is not in use. The oil inside the cooking pot can remain dangerously hot hours after use.
- To prevent spillover, do not overfill the fryer.
- Use well-insulated potholders or oven mitts when touching pot or lid handles. If possible, wear safety goggles to protect your eyes from oil splatter.
- The National Turkey Foundation recommends thawing the turkey in the refrigerator approximately 24 hours for every 5 pounds of weight.
- Keep an all-purpose fire extinguisher nearby. Never use water to extinguish a grease or oil fire. If the fire is manageable, use your all-purpose fire extinguisher. If the fire increases, immediately call the fire department by dialing 911.

NFPA Messaging:

Cooking

Turkey Fryers

8.12.1 NFPA continues to believe that turkey fryers that use cooking oil, as currently designed, are not suitable for safe use by even a well-informed and careful consumer. These turkey fryers use a substantial quantity of cooking oil at high temperatures and units currently available for home use pose a significant danger that hot oil will be released at some point during the cooking process. In addition, the burners that heat the oil can ignite spilled oil. The use of turkey fryers by consumers can lead to devastating burns, other injuries, and the destruction of property. NFPA urges those who prefer fried turkey to seek out professional establishments, such as grocery stores, specialty food retailers, and restaurants, for the preparation of the dish, or consider a new type of “oil-less” turkey fryer.

NOVEMBER: Week 4 – Home Heating

Overview: Heating equipment is the leading cause of home fire deaths nationally and the second leading known cause in Tennessee. Between 2010 and 2019, heating fires accounted for 6.6% of all structure fires and 10.8% of all structure fire deaths in Tennessee. Half of home heating equipment fires are reported during the months of December, January, and February. With a few simple safety tips and precautions, you can prevent most heating fires from happening.



Resources: The following resources are available:

- Heating safety tips
 - http://www.nfpa.org/~media/files/public-education/resources/safety-tip-sheets/heating_safety.pdf?la=en
- “NFPA Safety Tips – Home Heating Safety” YouTube video
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jS5xGfRO-Tw>
- Heating safety information in 9 other languages:
 - <http://www.nfpa.org/public-education/by-topic/top-causes-of-fire/heating/handouts-in-other-languages>
- “Home Heating Safety” YouTube video
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BqR4WNd3IA>
- “Heating Safety Messages in American Sign Language” YouTube video
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OCtnLC6-JPg>
- “Home Fires Involving Heating Equipment” NFPA report
 - <http://www.nfpa.org/news-and-research/fire-statistics-and-reports/fire-statistics/fire-causes/appliances-and-equipment/heating-equipment>
- U.S. home heating fires fact sheet
 - http://www.nfpa.org/~media/files/news-and-research/fire-statistics/fact-sheets/home_heating_fact_sheet.pdf?la=en

Media Tools: Use the following pre-written media releases and social media posts in your efforts to promote home heating safety:

- **Customizable Press Release**
 - <http://www.nfpa.org/~media/files/public-education/resources/community-tool-kits/heating-kit/heatingkitnewsrelease.doc?as=1&iar=1&la=en>
- **Twitter**
 - Nearly half of home heating equipment fires are reported during the months of December, January, and February. Stay safe: <http://ow.ly/W26oD>
 - Heating equipment is a leading cause of home fire deaths. Please review @NFPA's safety information: <http://ow.ly/W26zO> #WinterSafety
 - Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet from heating equipment (furnace, fireplace, wood stove, portable heater) <http://ow.ly/W1Lhl>
 - Give space heaters space! They account for 4 out of 5 home heating fire deaths: <http://ow.ly/W279j> #WinterSafety

- With a few simple safety tips & precautions you can prevent most heating fires from happening. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jS5xGfRO-Tw>
- **Facebook**
 - There is something about the winter months and curling up with a good book by the fireplace. But did you know that heating equipment is one of the leading causes of home fire deaths? With a few simple safety tips and precautions, you can prevent most heating fires from happening. Check them out here: http://www.nfpa.org/~media/files/public-education/resources/safety-tip-sheets/heating_safety.pdf
 - Space heaters, whether portable or stationary, accounted for 2 of every 5 (40%) of home heating fires and more than 4 out of 5 (84%) of home heating fire deaths. Find out more here: <http://www.nfpa.org/public-education/by-topic/top-causes-of-fire/heating>
 - Placing things that can burn too close to heating equipment or placing heating equipment too close to things that can burn, such as upholstered furniture, clothing, mattress, or bedding, was the leading factor contributing to ignition in fatal home heating fires and accounted for more than half (56%) of home heating fire deaths. Find out more here: <http://www.nfpa.org/public-education/by-topic/top-causes-of-fire/heating>

Educator Tip: Before the weather turns too cold, send out a mass press release to any major media markets in your area regarding home heating safety. The message should reach as many people as possible and should include information on:

- Safety tips for heating your home
- Safety tips for using gas heaters
- Safety tips for heating with electricity
- Safety tips for using space heaters
- Safety tips for using wood stoves
- Chimney safety

To send out this information, you should use as many mediums as possible. Generate print messages for newspapers and audio messages for radio, as well as use any social media outlets as possible. To get started, check out these templates from NFPA:

- Op/Ed on heating safety
 - <http://www.nfpa.org/~media/files/public-education/resources/community-tool-kits/heating-kit/heatingkitoped.rtf?as=1&iar=1&la=en>
- Letter to the Editor on alternative heating
 - <http://www.nfpa.org/~media/files/public-education/resources/community-tool-kits/heating-kit/heatingkitlettertoeditoralternativeheating.doc?as=1&iar=1&la=en>
- Example response to local fire caused by heating equipment
 - <http://www.nfpa.org/~media/files/public-education/resources/community-tool-kits/heating-kit/heatingkitlettertoeditorresponsetolocalfire.doc?as=1&iar=1&la=en>
- Sample article on wood stoves:
 - <http://www.nfpa.org/~media/files/public-education/resources/community-tool-kits/heating-kit/heatingkitwoodstovearticle.docx?la=en>
- Sample article on portable space heaters:
 - <http://www.nfpa.org/~media/files/public-education/resources/community-tool-kits/heating-kit/heatingkitportableheatersarticle.docx?la=en>

- Sample article on keeping heaters “three feet away”:
 - http://www.nfpa.org/~media/files/public-education/by-topic/holidays/put-a-freeze-on-winter-fires/winter_freeze_three_feet_away.docx?la=en

NFPA Messaging:

Heating

General Heating

10.1.3 All heaters need space. Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet (1 meter) away from heating equipment.

10.1.10 Maintain heating equipment and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected annually by a qualified professional.

Portable Electric Space Heaters

10.2.3 Purchase and use space heaters that have an automatic shut off—if they tip over, they shut off.

10.2.4 Place space heaters on a solid, flat surface and keep them and their electrical cords away from things that can burn, high traffic areas, and doorways.