

Fire Prevention Week October 5-11, 2008

[New survey finds concerns about economy may increase incidence of home fires](#)



A new survey, commissioned by the American Red Cross and NFPA for Fire Prevention Week, shows that the majority (79%) of Americans are concerned about the rising cost of heating their homes, and many (48%) will use an alternative heating source (i.e. portable space heaters, stoves, ovens, and fireplaces) to reduce their bills this winter.

The survey identified additional behaviors related to appliance maintenance and cooking that could also present home fire hazards this winter.

More survey results

- 36% of people with fireplaces reported they never cleaned or inspected their chimneys.
- 23% of respondents did not consider it essential to make sure someone is home when food is cooking on the stove.
- young adults, ages 18-24, were more likely than other respondents to state they will use the oven to keep the kitchen warm this winter (17% versus 7% for all households).

“As we head into, what by all accounts is likely to be a very costly heating season, these survey results and Fire Prevention Week provide a critical opportunity for us to remind people about the things they can do to prevent home fires and keep their families safe and warm this winter,” said NFPA President James M. Shannon.

The telephone survey of 1,003 U.S. adults 18 years and older was conducted on September 25-28, 2008 by CARAVAN®. The margin of error is +/- 3.1% at the 95% confidence level.

Smoke alarms

Smoke alarms that are properly installed and maintained play a vital role in reducing fire deaths and injuries, and have contributed to an almost 50% decrease in fire deaths since the late 1970s.



NEW! What you should know about smoke alarms

Our [fact sheet](#) (PDF, 639 KB) includes information on ionization vs. photoelectric technologies, nuisance alarms, and misleading TV demonstrations on smoke alarm performance.

Facts & figures

- A 2004 telephone survey found that 96% of U.S. households had at least one smoke alarm, yet in 2000-2004, no smoke alarms were present or none operated in almost half (46%) of the reported home fires.
- An estimated 890 lives could be saved each year if all homes had working smoke alarms.
- 65% of reported home fire deaths in 2000-2004 resulted from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.

▶ Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of the home.

▶ Interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.

▶ Test smoke alarms at least monthly by pushing the test button.

▶ [See all safety tips.](#)



NFPA Safety Tips

Source: NFPA's "[U.S. Experience with Smoke Alarms and Other Fire Detection/Alarm Equipment](#)", by Marty Ahrens, April 2007

Children and fire

Children playing with fire cause hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries each year. Preschoolers are most likely to start these fires, typically by playing with matches and lighters, and are most likely to die in them.



Facts & figures*

- In 2002, children playing with fire started an estimated 13,900 structure fires that were reported to U.S. fire departments, causing an estimated 210 civilian deaths, 1,250 civilian injuries and \$339 million in direct property damage.
- The figures for 2002 structure fires, civilian deaths and civilian injuries are the lowest ever recorded.
- Most of the people killed in child-playing fires are under 5, and such fires are the leading cause of fire deaths among preschoolers.
- Roughly two out of every three child-playing fires -- and three out of four associated deaths and injuries -- involve matches or lighters.
- The child-playing fire problem has been smaller, relative to population, in Canada and much smaller in Japan.
- Children also start fires by playing with candles, fireworks, stoves and cigarettes.
- Among fatal home fires started by children playing, seven out of 10 involve children igniting bedding, mattresses, upholstered furniture or clothing.
- Just over half of child-playing fires in the home start in a bedroom.
- Children who start fires may be children in crisis, with the fires acting as cries for help from stressful life experiences or abuse, according to studies of fire-setting behavior.
- As of 2002, deaths in child-playing home structure fires had declined by roughly half since 1994, when the child-resistant lighter standard went into effect.

- Store matches and lighters out of children's reach and sight, up high, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- Never use lighters or matches as a source of amusement for children; they may imitate you.
- If your child expresses curiosity about fire or has been playing with fire, calmly but firmly explain that matches and lighters are tools for adults only.
- Use only lighters designed with child-resistant features. Remember child-resistant does not mean child proof.
- Teach young children to tell an adult if they see matches or lighters, and teach school-age children to bring any matches or lighters to an adult.
- Never leave matches or lighters in a bedroom or any place where children may go without supervision.
- If you suspect your child is intentionally setting fires or unduly fascinated with fire, get help. Your local fire department, school, or community counseling agency can put you in touch with trained experts.



NFPA Safety Tips

Source: NFPA's "Children Playing with Fire" report by John R. Hall, Jr., April 2005.

Fall City Wide Clean Up

The Fall clean up over the past weekend sent out 440 cubic yards of all kinds of trash, limbs, furniture and other forms of debris. The City Street crews worked throughout the weekend assisting with unloading as Joshua residents arrived with items to be hauled off. The City wide clean up is paid for from grant funding from the North Central Texas Council of Governments and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Dates for the next City wide clean up will be published soon. Thank you for all the participation.

Garage Sale Permits now on City Website

You now can review a list of Garage Sales by checking the City website at www.cityofjoshuatx.us and click on Garage Sales.

Upcoming Events

4A Economic Development Board Meeting October 14, 2008 at 5:30 PM

4B Economic Development Board Meeting October 14, 2008 at 7:00 PM

City Council regular Meeting October 16, 2008 at 7:00 PM