

ROCKFORD HOUSING AUTHORITY

RESIDENT FIRE PREVENTION POLICY



AHRMA 

ASSISTED HOUSING RISK MANGEMENT ASSOCIATION

Assembled and submitted by Rockford Housing Authority's Safety Department

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

FIRE.....	911
POLICE.....	911
RHA (AFTER HOURS).....	987-3838
NORTHERN ILLINOIS GAS.....	965-2011
COM ED.....	(800)-334-7661
POISON CONTROL.....	(800)-222-1222
NATIONAL HEALTH INFORMATION CENTER.....	(800)-336-4797
ILLINOIS ROAD CONDITIONS.....	962-7051
AMERICAN RED CROSS.....	963-8471
ANIMAL CONTROL.....	877-3073

RESIDENT FIRE PREVENTION POLICY

This resident fire prevention policy has been developed to help educate housing authority residents on hazards of fire and what precautions can be taken to prevent a fire. Residents should read the information in this policy and a copy of this policy should be kept for future reference. If you do not understand any information in this policy please contact Housing Authority Management. At the end of this policy you will be asked to sign a statement that you understand and will comply with this policy to the best of your ability.



The following information will address the major causes of fires and safety rules to prevent fires.

Children Playing with Matches or Lighters: Children are curious about fire. Often what begins as a natural exploration of the unknown can lead to tragedy. At home, children usually play with fire in bedrooms, in closets and under beds. These are “secret” places where there are a lot of things that catch fire easily. Here are some related safety rules.

- Supervise young children closely. Do not leave them alone even for short periods of time.
- Keep matches and lighters in a secured drawer or cabinet.
- Check under beds and in closets for burned matches, evidence your child may be playing with fire.
- Take the mystery out of fire play by teaching children that fire is a tool, not a toy.
- Develop a home fire escape plan, practice it with your children and designate a meeting place outside.
- Teach children the nature of fire. It is FAST, HOT, DARK and DEADLY!
- Teach children not to hide from firefighters, but to get out quickly and call for help from another location.
- Show children how to crawl low on the floor, below the smoke, to get out of the house and stay out in the case of fire.
- Demonstrate how to stop, drop to the ground and roll if their clothes catch fire.
- Test your smoke alarms frequently to make sure they are operating properly. Having a working smoke alarm dramatically increases your chances of surviving a fire.

Danger —
Children and Lighters



KEEP CIGARETTE LIGHTERS AWAY
FROM YOUNG CHILDREN

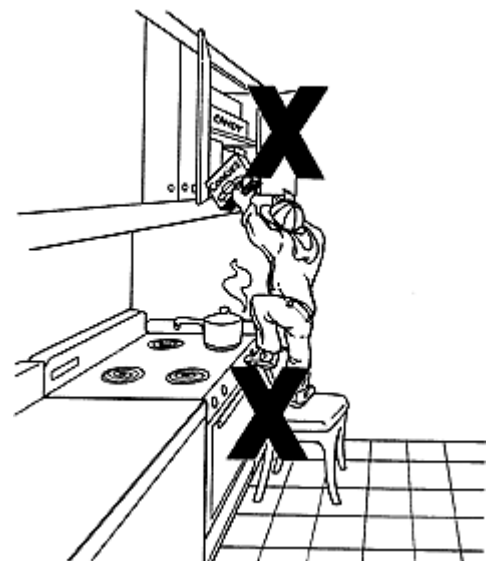


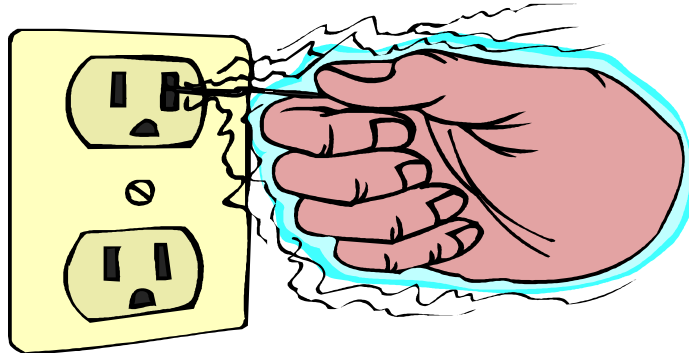
Kitchen Safety: Cooking fires are a leading cause of home fire. The majority of cooking fires start with the ignition of common household items (i.e., wall coverings, paper or plastic bags, curtains, etc.). Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home cooking fires. Here are some related safety rules.



- Never leave cooking food on the stovetop unattended, and keep a close eye on food cooking inside the oven.
- Keep cooking areas clean and clear of combustibles (i.e. potholders, towels, rags, drapes and food packaging).
- Clean the exhaust hood and area around the stove regularly and wipe up spilled grease as soon as the surface of the stove is cool.
- Keep children and pets away from cooking areas by creating a three-foot “kid-free zone” around the stove.

- Turn pot handles inward so they can't be bumped and children can't grab them.
- Always keep a potholder, oven mitt and lid handy. If a small grease fire starts in a pan, put on an oven mitt and smother the flames by carefully sliding the lid over the pan. Turn off the burner. Don't remove the lid until it is completely cool. Never put water on a grease fire and never discharge a fire extinguisher onto a pan fire, it can spray or shoot burning grease around the kitchen, actually spreading the fire.
- If there is an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed to prevent it from burning you and your clothing.
- If there is a microwave fire, keep the door closed and unplug the microwave.

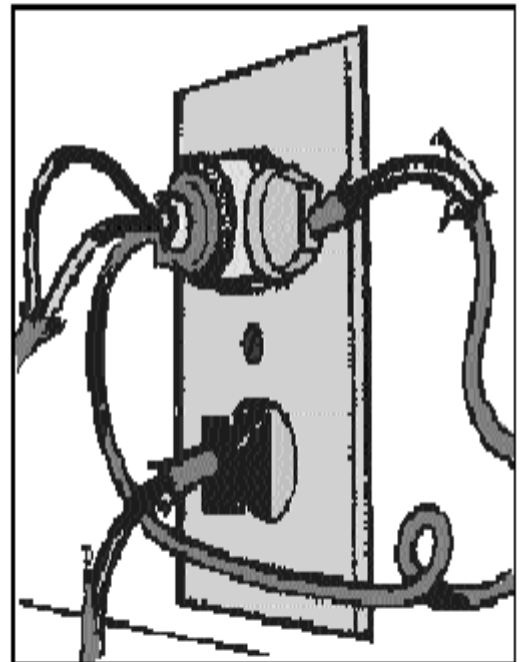




Electrical Safety: Faulty or misused wiring, switches, outlets, cords and plugs, fuse and circuit breaker boxes, lighting fixtures and lamps are the leading cause of electrical related fires. Here are some related safety rules.

- Replace or repair loose or frayed cords on all electrical devices.
- Do not run extension cords across doorways or under carpets. It is better not to use extension cords.
- In homes with small children, electrical outlets should have plastic safety covers.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for plugging an appliance into a receptacle outlet.
- Avoid overloading outlets. Consider plugging only one high-wattage appliance in each receptacle outlet at a time. If a circuit breaker trips or a fuse blows frequently, immediately cut down on the number of appliances on that line.
- If outlets or switches feel warm, shut off the circuit and have them checked by the maintenance staff.
- When possible, avoid the use of multiple outlet adapters and other devices that allow the connection of multiple appliances into a single receptacle.
- Place lamps on level surfaces, away from things that can burn and use bulbs that match the lamp's recommended wattage.
- Allow air space around the TV to prevent overheating. The same applies to plug-in radios and stereo sets, and to powerful lamps.

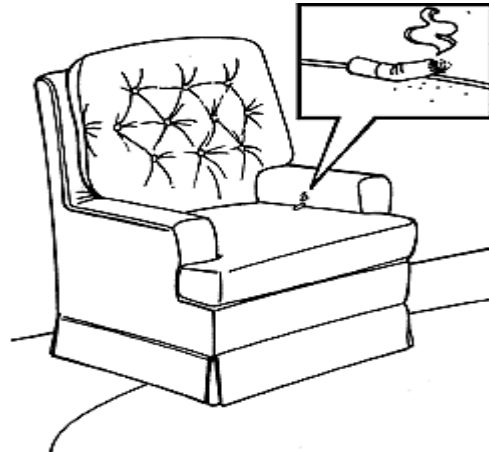
Don't let an Octopus loose in your house!



Smoking Material –Related Fires: The leading cause of residential fires associated with smoking materials is abandoned or carelessly disposed of smoking materials. The most common material first ignited in residential smoking material-related fires was mattresses and bedding, followed by upholstered furniture. Here are some related safety rules.



- Keep smoking materials away from anything that can burn (i.e., mattresses, bedding, upholstered furniture, draperies, etc.).
- Never smoke in bed when drowsy, medicated or intoxicated as this could lead to falling asleep with a lighted cigarette.
- Use large, deep, non-tip ashtrays to prevent ashes from spilling onto furniture and check them frequently. Do not rest ashtrays on sofas or chairs.
- Completely douse cigarette butts and ashes with water before throwing them away as butts can smolder in the trash and cause a fire.



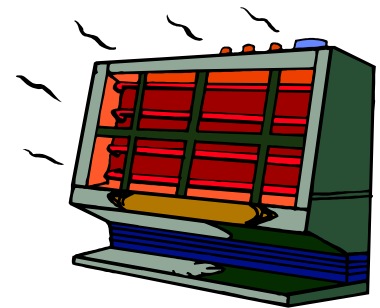
Candle Safety: Nationally, home candle fires have doubled in number over the last decade. The increasing popularity and demand for candles also brings more risk of fire and fire deaths. To keep safe follow these safety rules.

- Extinguish all candles when leaving the room or going to sleep.
- Keep candles away from items that can catch fire (e.g. clothing, books, paper, curtains, Christmas trees, flammable decorations).
- Use candleholders that are sturdy, won't tip over easily, are made from a material that can't burn and are large enough to collect dripping wax.
- Don't place lit candles in windows where blinds and curtains can close over them.
- Place candleholders on a sturdy, uncluttered surface and do not use candles in place where it could be knocked over by children or pets.
- Keep candles up high out of reach of children.
- Never leave a child unattended in a room with a candle. A child should not sleep in a room with a lit candle.
- Don't allow children or teens to have candles in their bedrooms.
- Store candles, matches and lighters up high and out children's sight and reach, preferably in a locked cabinet.

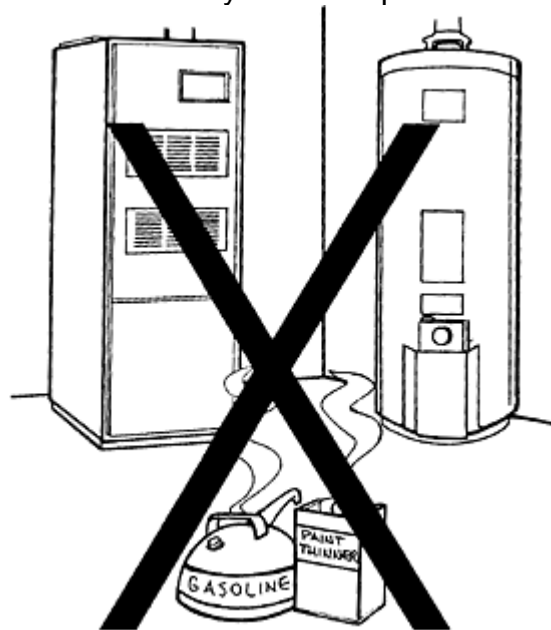


Space Heaters: Supplemental space heaters are a major cause of fire during winter months. When space heaters are misused, tragedy can happen. Here are the following safety rules.

- Portable space heaters are not allowed on Housing Authority premises. If your residence is not adequately heating contact the Housing Authority.
- Never use a gas range as a substitute for a furnace.



Maintaining the Utility Room: Fires can be started in utility rooms and closets where furnaces, hot water heaters and clothes dryers are kept. Here are the following safety rules.



- Keep at least an 18-inch clearance around furnaces, hot water heaters and clothes dryers. The pilot lights of these appliances can ignite combustible material (i.e., newspaper, cardboard, clothing and plastic items).
- Do not store flammable chemicals, such as gasoline and paints inside. The vapors from the flammable chemical will seek an ignition source and can explode.
- The lint traps on clothes dryers should be cleaned after each use and clean out built up lint behind clothes dryers.
- Never leave home with the clothes dryer running.
- If you smell natural gas leave the premise immediately. Open windows and doors as you go. Don't use matches, appliances, electric switches or phones. Once outside, call the gas company. Don't go back until the gas company says it's safe.

Smoke Detectors: Smoke is responsible for three out of four deaths. In relationship to smoke detectors, follow these rules.

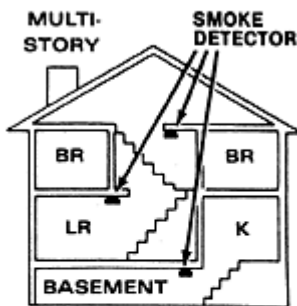
TEST YOUR DETECTOR MONTHLY



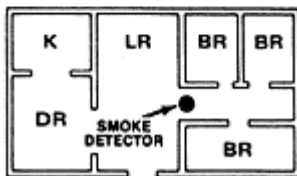
Follow manufacturer's directions for testing the detector.

- An operating smoke detector should be maintained on every level of the residence.
- Test every detector at least once a month.
- Keep smoke detectors dust free. Replace batteries with new ones at least once a year or sooner if the detector makes a chirping sound.
- If you have a smoke detector directly wired into your electrical system, be sure that the little signal light is blinking periodically. This tells you that the alarm is active.

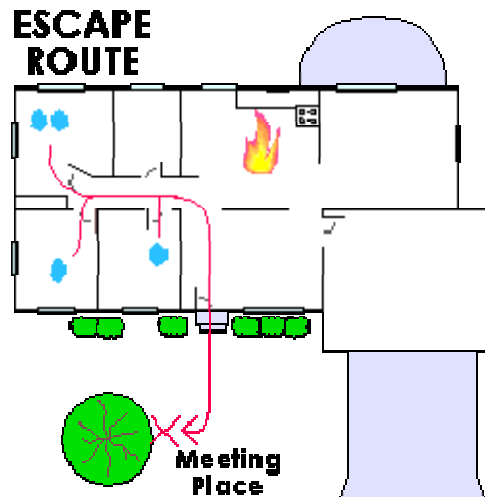
PLACE ONE DETECTOR ON EVERY FLOOR



SINGLE LEVEL



Think Ahead with an Exit Plan: As with other things, the best motto is, “**Be Prepared.**” The following safety rules should be followed if a fire occurs.



- Prepare a floor plan of your residence showing at least two ways out of each room. Make sure a bedroom window is not blocked by furniture, such as a headboard, dresser or entertainment center.
- Be fully prepared for a real fire, when a smoke alarm sounds, get out immediately and once you're out, stay out – leave the fire fighting to the professionals!
- Agree on a fixed location out-of-doors where family members are to gather for a head count.
- Stay together away from the fire. Call 911 from another location.
- If you live in an apartment building, make sure that you're familiar with the building's evacuation plan. In case of a fire, use the stairs, never the elevator.



Conclusion: This Resident Fire Prevention Policy is intended to help provide a safe living environment for our Housing Authority residents. Fire can grow and spread quickly through your home and your actions can mean the difference between life and death.



Resident Fire Prevention Policy

Resident Fire Emergency Actions

If you discover a fire, see smoke, smell something burning, or hear the fire alarm, **Remain Calm and Use Good Judgment!**

Single Family/Duplex structure:

1. Notify all occupants and leave the building as quickly and safely as possible
2. At a safe location, verify everyone is out of the building
3. At a safe location, call **911** as quickly as possible
4. Contact your appropriate Site Manager to report the fire
5. DO NOT re-enter the building for any reason
6. Remain in close proximity to assist with information once the Fire Department, Manager, or RHA Maintenance people arrive.

Multi-family Structure:

1. Notify all occupants and leave the building as quickly and safely as possible
2. At a safe location, verify everyone is out of the building – all adjoining apartments too
3. At a safe location, call 911 as quickly as possible
4. Contact your appropriate Site Manager to report the fire
5. DO NOT re-enter the building for any reason
6. Remain in close proximity to assist with information once Emergency Personnel, Manager or RHA Maintenance staff arrive.

Important:

With the back of your hand touch the doorknob or door surface, if it is hot or if there is smoke present, **DO NOT OPEN IT!** If the fire or smoke is in your apartment leave immediately, close the door behind you, pull the nearest fire alarm or call 911. If you encounter heavy smoke, drop to your hands and knees if possible and crawl to the door or nearest exit.

IF YOU MUST STAY IN YOUR APARTMENT:

1. Pull the nearest fire alarm if possible
2. Return to your apartment
3. Keep your door closed, but don't lock it
4. **CALL 911**

5. Call your Site Manager
6. After hours call 489-8585
7. Stay in your Apartment and wait for help to arrive

IMPORTANT:

If smoke enters your dwelling, place a wet towel along the bottom of the door. If the smoke inside your apartment becomes heavy, open the windows and hang a white towel or sheet outside. Stay close to the ground, the air is fresher at floor level.

IF YOU MUST LEAVE YOUR APARTMENT:

1. Close the door behind you, but don't lock it
2. Pull the nearest fire alarm
3. Use the closest exit or stairwell to leave the building
4. **DO NOT USE THE ELEVATOR**
5. From a safe place Call 911
6. Call your Site Manager
7. After hours call 489-8585 and wait for help to arrive

FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED:

Strobe smoke detectors are installed for the hearing impaired. They are equipped with a flashing light that indicates the presence of fire or smoke. If you are hearing impaired and your apartment does not have a strobe smoke detector, contact your Site Manager or the RHA Main Office immediately at 987-3838 immediately. (ROCKFORD HOUSING AUTHORITY EMERGENCY AND AFTER HOURS)

Resident Fire Prevention Policy:

Reporting Suspicious Activity

The Safety and Welfare of all occupants of Rockford Housing Authority property is most important and is of the highest priority in enforcing this Fire Prevention Policy. Fire damage to property can force you to relocate, cause extensive damage with costly repairs,

and more importantly, the loss of life. With this in mind the Rockford Housing Authority encourages you to be aware of circumstances in your neighborhood, visitors, and even within your family.

Fire is a vital part of our existence however it is an intriguing and unique concept that can interest everyone, children and adults. This interest can lead to experimenting with matches, lighters, stoves, or anything that may cause a flame. This experimenting can then easily and accidentally evolve into a fire causing loss of property and life.

In many instances there are symptoms that can be seen to make you aware of your child's interest in matches or fires. Rockford Housing Authority asks that you take those "interests" seriously and seek help with the problem. If you suspect or know of any instances where matches or some other form of dangerous activity is happening you should contact your Site Manager. Your response will be kept confidential.

There is counseling through the Rockford Fire Department for anyone that needs help with "pyromania" (intense interest in fires) and confidentiality will be maintained. It is in everyone's best interest that something like this is taken care of immediately.

Your action may save a life! Failure to act would be worse.

Resident Fire Prevention Policy:

Attendance at Fire Prevention Classes

When fires occur their results are often traumatic. Families must relocate, possessions are lost forever, extensive damage to property and high costs to renovate along

with the risk of loss of lives, mandates that the Rockford Housing Authority enforce their Fire Prevention Policy.

When a legal resident, listed on the lease, or a visitor causes a fire the Rockford Housing Authority **requires** attendance at a Rockford Fire Department "Fire Awareness" class. If the person is a juvenile the parents or responsible adult must accompany them to these sessions and participate as well.

Failure to attend and cooperate in this Fire Awareness activity will lead to eviction from Rockford Housing Authority property. Attending these sessions does not guarantee the resident will not be evicted as each incident will be judged on its on merit.

The Safety and Welfare of all occupants of Rockford Housing Authority property is most important and is of the highest priority in enforcing this Fire Prevention Policy.

Statement of Acknowledgement

I hereby affirm that I have read and fully understand the Resident Fire Prevention Policy. I will comply with the stated safety rules to the best of my

ability. I will be held responsible for any negligent action on my part. If I am involved in a fire incident of my residence, I understand that it will be fully investigated and if I am found negligent reckless or in careless disregard, I will be subject to eviction. I will also maintain a copy of this Resident Fire Prevention Policy for future reference.

Signature_____

Date_____

Manager _____

Date_____

Review and Initial at Recertification

