

Senior Fire Prevention Plan

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Fire can happen to anyone and at anytime. When we get older our responses needed for quick action are lessened. This can be especially dangerous in an emergency like a fire. Impairments such as hearing loss, visual problems or issues with mobility can affect how we react.

Patterns in High Risk Activities:

- 39% percent of older adults who were killed in residential structure fires were asleep at the time of the fire.
- 32% percent were trying to escape when they died.
- 8% percent were attempting to control the fire.

The Goals: Practice fire-safe behaviors when cooking and heating. Maintain smoke alarms, develop and practice a fire escape plan.

Cooking Safety- Many families gather in the kitchen to spend time together, but it can be one of the most hazardous rooms in the house if you don't practice safe cooking behaviors. Cooking is the leading cause of injury among people ages 65 and older and the 3rd cause of fire death.

Serious injury or even death can happen when wearing loose clothing (especially hanging sleeves), walking away from a cooking pot on the stove, or leaving combustible materials, such as potholders or papers near the burners. When in the kitchen, consider:

- Always attending your cooking.
- Make a concentrated effort to wear short or tight-fitting sleeves when you cook. Keep papers, towels, potholders away from flames.
- When trying to keep your home warm, don't supplement heat with the range or stove.
- Take a backwards glance at the kitchen before you retire to make sure all is well.

Heating Safety- During the winter months of January and February, there are more home fires than any other time of year. Heating devices like space heaters make our homes more comfortably warm, but should always be used with added care. Heating is the second leading cause of fire death and the third leading cause of injury to people ages 65 and older. Before you get too comfortable, consider:

- Keeping three feet clearance of combustibles around the stove and space heater.
- When buying a space heater, look for a control feature that automatically shuts off the power if the heater falls over. Do not use space heaters in the bathroom or other wet areas. Talk to Cloverleaf management for recommendations of this equipment.
- Candles are the fastest growing fire in Minnesota. Always attend their use and have no combustibles within 3 feet.

Maintaining for Fire Safety- Like anything else in our homes, we must take steps to maintain our safety and ensure getting out alive from a fire situation. Consider these steps:

- Smoke alarms are in your bedrooms and in the halls outside the bedrooms to keep you safe. Call management if there is any problem with them.
- Develop a safe escape plan. Discuss with management what the plan is for you and all the residents.
- Have a meeting place. It needs to be in front of your residence where you can be seen by emergency personnel.
- Consider sleeping with your bedroom doors closed at night, as they act as temporary fire barriers.
- Practice your plan twice a year. Practice helps to make it a habit and allows you to find things in need of change to make your plan workable.
- When living alone, involve family, friends and neighbors with your plan.

Fires are predictable and preventable at any age. Making simple adjustments in our behaviors can dramatically reduce the elevated risks from fire injury or death.