



USAG – FS/HAAF Safety Gram

Sustaining, Supporting, and Defending Safety Excellence



SG #16-01

October is Fire Prevention Month

Oct 15

The [U.S. Fire Administration](#) reports that fires kill more than 4,000 Americans each year and approximately injure 20,000 more. U.S. fire departments respond to nearly 2 million fires each year, with three-quarters of them occurring in residences.

A home is often referred to as a safe haven. This month, make sure your home is protected from (and your family is prepared for) a fire. Here are 9 simple tips to help you avoid fires and reduce the risk of injury should one occur:

- 1) **Smoke Alarms** – These are still a very important addition to your home. Smoke alarms are widely available and inexpensive. Install a smoke alarm on every level of your home and test it monthly.
- 2) **Prevent Electrical Fires** – Don't overload circuits or extension cords. Cords and wires should never be placed under rugs or in high traffic areas. Avoid loose electrical connections by checking the fit of the plug in the wall outlet. If the plug loosely fits, inspect the outlet right away. A poor connection between the plug and the outlet can cause overheating and can start a fire in minutes.
- 3) **Keep Plugs Safe** – Unplug all appliances when not in use. Follow the manufacturer's safety precautions and use your senses to spot any potential disasters. If a plug is overheating, smells strange, shorts out or sparks – the appliance should be shut off immediately, then replaced or repaired.
- 4) **Alternate Heaters** – Make sure there is ample space around any portable heating unit. Anything that could catch fire should be at least three feet away. Inspect your chimney annually and use fire screens to help keep any fires in the fireplace.
- 5) **Create An Escape Route** – Create and practice your escape plan with your family from every room in the house. Practice staying low to the floor and checking for hot doors using the back of your hand. It's just like a routine school fire drill – but in your home.
- 6) **Position Appliances Carefully** – Try to keep TV sets, kitchen and other appliances away from windows with curtains. If there is a wiring problem, curtains can spread a fire quickly. Additionally, keeping your appliances away from water sources (like rain coming in from windows) can help prevent wiring damage which can lead to a fire.
- 7) **Clean Dryer Vents** – Clothes dryers often start fires in residential areas. Clean the lint filter every time you start a load of clothes to dry or after the drying cycle is complete. Make sure your exhaust duct is made of metal tubing and not plastic or foil. Clean the exhaust duct with a good quality dryer vent brush to prevent blockage & check for lint build up behind the dryer at least twice a year.
- 8) **Be Careful Around the Holidays** – If you fill your home with lights during the holiday season, keep them away from anything that can easily catch fire. Check all of your lights prior to stringing them up and dispose of anything with frayed or exposed wires.
- 9) **Conduct Regular Inspections** – Check all of your electronic equipment and wiring at least once a month. Taking a little time to do this each month can really pay off.

Following these simple tips could potentially save your life or the life of a loved one. Pass this list on to your friends and family and make this fire prevention month count!

Manage The Risk – Protect The Force For additional information contact: Your Unit Addition Duty Safety Officer (ADSO) or Collateral Duty Safety Person (CDSP), or USAG Installation Safety Office: Fort Stewart Office @ 912-767-6541; Hunter Army Airfield Office @ 912-345-4901.