

# Portage Prepares

Helping Portage County Citizens prepare for emergencies and disasters.

2013



If your clothes catch fire,  
STOP, DROP, and ROLL!

1. Stop immediately, drop to the ground and cover your face with your hands.
2. Roll over and over or back and forth to put out the fire.
3. If burned, immediately cool the burn with cool water for 3 to 5 minutes and cover with a clean, dry cloth. Don't apply creams, ointments, sprays or other home remedies.



Office of Homeland  
Security & Emergency  
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## Board of County Commissioners

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## Fire Causes

### Home Fires

- In 2011, U.S. fire departments responded to 370,000 home structure fires. These fires caused 13,910 civilian injuries, 2,520 civilian deaths, and \$6.9 billion in direct damage.
- On average, seven people die in U.S. home fires per day.
- Cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries, followed by heating equipment. Smoking is a leading cause of civilian home fire deaths.
- Most fatal fires kill one or two people. In 2011, 12 home fires killed five or more people resulting in a

### Candles

- During 2007-2011, candles caused 3% of home fires, 4% of home fire deaths, 7% of home fire injuries, and 6% of direct property damage from home fires.
- On average, there are 32 home candle fires reported per day.
- Roughly one-third of these fires started in the bedroom; however, the candle industry found that only 13% of candle users burn candles in the bedroom most often.
- More than half of all candle fires start when things that can burn are too close to the candle.

### Cooking

- U.S. Fire Departments responded to an estimated annual average of 156,600 cooking-related fires between 2007-2011, resulting in 400 civilian deaths, 5,080 civilian injuries, and \$853 million in direct damage.
- Two of every five home fires start in the kitchen.
- Unattended cooking was a factor in 34% of reported home cooking fires.
- Two-thirds of home cooking fires started with ignition of food or other cooking materials.
- Ranges accounted for the 58% of home cooking fire incidents. Ovens accounted for 16%.
- Children under five face a higher risk of non-fire burns associated with cooking than being burned in a cooking fire.
- Microwave ovens are one of the leading home products associated with scald burn injuries not related to fires. Nearly half (44%) of the microwave oven injuries seen at emergency rooms in 2011 were scald burns.
- Clothing was the item first ignited in less than 1% of home cooking fires, but these incidents accounted for 16% of the cooking fire deaths

### Electrical

- About half (49%) of home electrical fires involved electrical distribution or lighting equipment. Other leading types of equipment were washer or dryer, fan, portable or stationary space heater, air conditioning equipment water heater and range.
- Electrical failure or malfunctions cause an average of almost 50,000 home fires per year; resulting in roughly 450 deaths and \$1.5 billion in direct property damage.



### Escape Planning

- According to the NFPA survey, only one-third of Americans have both developed and practiced a home fire escape plan.
- Almost three-quarters of Americans do have an escape plan; however, more than half never practiced it.
- One-third of Americans households who made and estimate they thought they would have at least 6 minutes before a fire in their home would become life threatening. The time available is often less. And only 8% said their first thought on hearing a smoke alarm would be to get out!

### Smoke Alarm Maintenance:

- Test alarm monthly.
- Replace batteries or replace according to manufacturer's instructions at least once a year.
- The entire smoke alarm unit should be replaced every 8-10 years.

### Fire Extinguisher Maintenance:

- Regularly check to make sure it is not blocked by any furniture.
- Check to see if pressure is at recommended level and all parts are operable and not damaged or restricted in any way.
- Check the manufacturer's recommendations.

## Prevent Fires

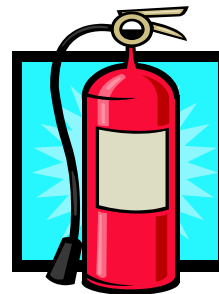


### Smoke Alarms

- Almost two-thirds (62%) of reported home fire deaths resulted from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.
- Working smoke alarms cut the risk of dying in reported home fires in half.
- In fires considered large enough to activate the smoke alarm, hardwired alarms operated 92% of the time, while battery powered alarms operated only 77% of the time.

### Precautions

- Keep anything that can catch fire; potholders, oven mitts, wooden utensils, paper or plastic bags, food packaging, towels, or curtains away from your stovetop.
- Keep stovetop and oven clean.
- Keep pets off cooking surfaces and nearby countertops.
- Loose clothing can dangle onto stove burners and catch fire if it comes into contact with a gas flame or electric burner.

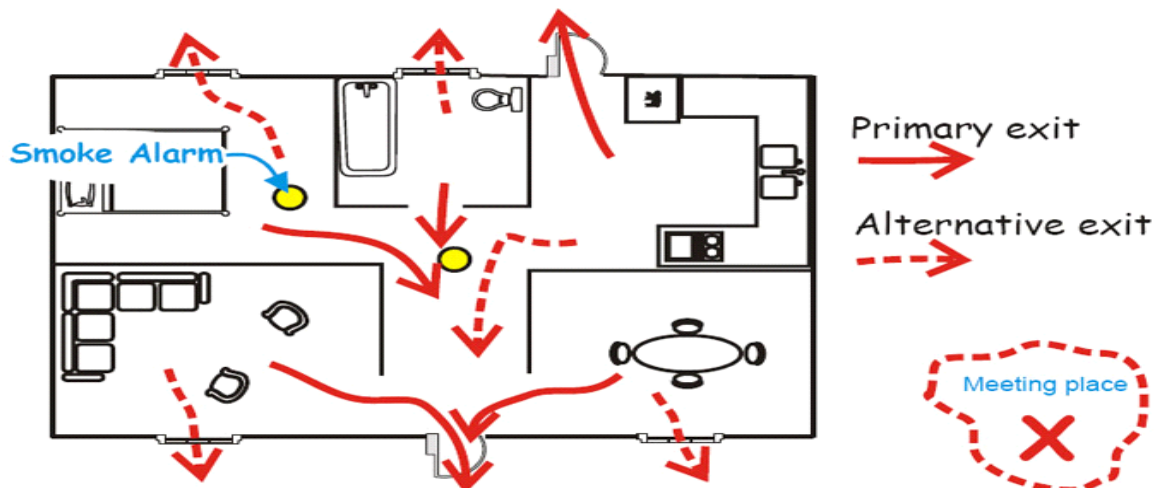


### Caring for others

- Children under five are naturally curious about fire. Many play with matches and lighters. Take the mystery out of fire play by teaching your children that fire is a tool, not a toy.



- Every year over 1,000 senior citizens die in fires. Seniors are especially vulnerable because many live alone and can't respond quickly.



Portage Prepares is a county education program for preparing Portage County communities to meet the challenges of emergencies and/or disasters in order to be safe and reduce injury. Portage Prepares is a program of the Portage County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and its Advisory Committee under the guidance of the Portage County Board of Commissioners. For additional information on emergency preparedness, go to our website at: [www.co.portage.oh.us/portageprep/](http://www.co.portage.oh.us/portageprep/) or follow us on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/PortagePrepares](https://www.facebook.com/PortagePrepares) or follow us on Twitter @PortagePrep.