



# Fire Safety & Prevention

Ina Ruttle, Municipal Fire Chief  
[inafire@hotmail.com](mailto:inafire@hotmail.com)



# Presentation Objectives



- To educate participants on how to avoid fires and fire related injuries.
- To create awareness of fire deaths and injuries and their common causes.
- To inform participants of their personal responsibility toward fire safety and injury prevention.

# Introduction



**In the US and Canada, a home fire is reported every 80 seconds.**

**– Fire causes \$2.1 billion annually in property damage;**

**– 482 civilians die on account of fire in Canada each year;**

**– Every 2 ½ hours, someone in the US or Canada dies in a house fire;**



# In the Home

- People feel the safest in their homes, however residential properties are where most fires and fire deaths occur.
  - 76% of all structure fires occurred in residential properties.
  - 97% of structural fire deaths occurred in residential properties.



# Fire Causes



- The top fire causes include:
  - Cooking (49%)
  - Open Flame (10%)
  - Heating (9%)
  - Incendiary/Arson (8%)
  - Smoking (4%)

*\*leading cause of fire fatalities*

*Personal vigilance is the best way to avoid and survive fires!*



# Cooking Fires



- Pay attention to what you're cooking.
  - If you leave the room, turn off the stove.
- Don't cook if you're sleepy or if you're impaired.

*Nearly half of all home fires originate in the kitchen.*



# Reduce Your Chance of a Cooking Fire



- **Keep flammable items away from heat sources.**

*Curtains, potholders, towels, clothing, etc.*



- **Clean your stovetop frequently to avoid grease build up.**

- **Keep flammable cleaners away from heat sources.**



# Grease Fires



- Always have the matching lid nearby!
  - If you have a small grease fire you can smother it with the lid.
  - **NEVER PUT WATER ON A GREASE FIRE!**





# Smoking Related Fires



- Cigarettes can smolder for hours.
- Tips to avoid smoking related fires:
  - Don't smoke inside.
  - Discard smoking materials in a fire safe container.
    - Use a proper, heavy ashtray which won't tip easily.
    - Don't improvise!



*Smoking accounts for roughly 25% of civilian home fire deaths*

# Candles



*Unattended candles are a leading fire cause.*

- **Candle safety tips:**
  - Use flameless candles.
  - When you leave the room, blow out the candle.
  - Keep anything that could burn at least a foot away:
    - curtains, clothes, paper, etc.
  - Don't set the candles on anything combustible.
    - Fires can start when the candle burns down to the base.



# Electrical Safety

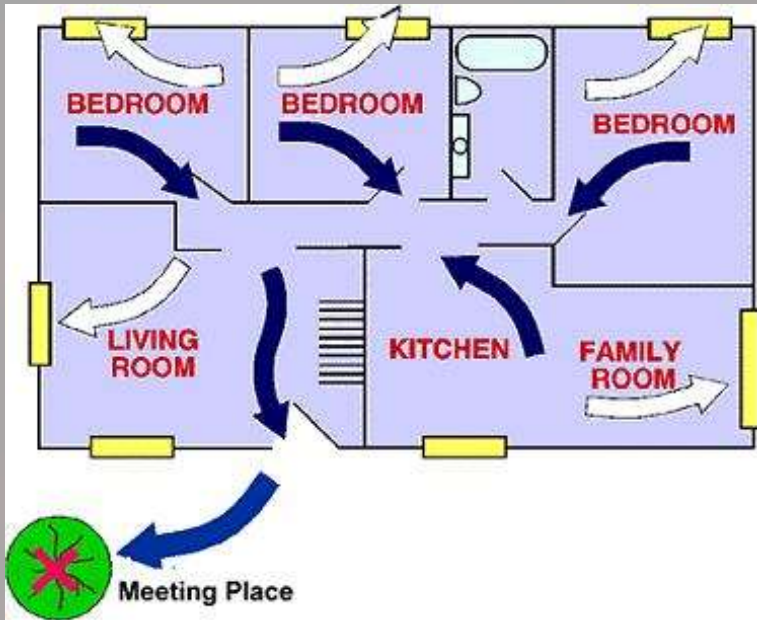


- Do not overload electrical sockets.
- Do not run cords under rugs or furniture.  
*They can become worn, overheat, and cause a fire.*
- Avoid putting cords against walls or across doorways.
- Use power strips equipped with overload protection.



- Make sure all power strips and extension cords are tested and approved by a laboratory such as CSA.

# Escape Routes



*Know your escape routes  
and practice them.*

- When the smoke alarm sounds, you may only have seconds or minutes to escape safely.
- Have a meeting place for everyone to gather outside.
- Plan two ways out, in case one way is filled with smoke or fire.

# Important Safety Elements



- Alarms
  - Smoke
  - Carbon Monoxide



- Fire extinguishers

- Residential Fire Sprinkler Systems



# Smoke Alarms

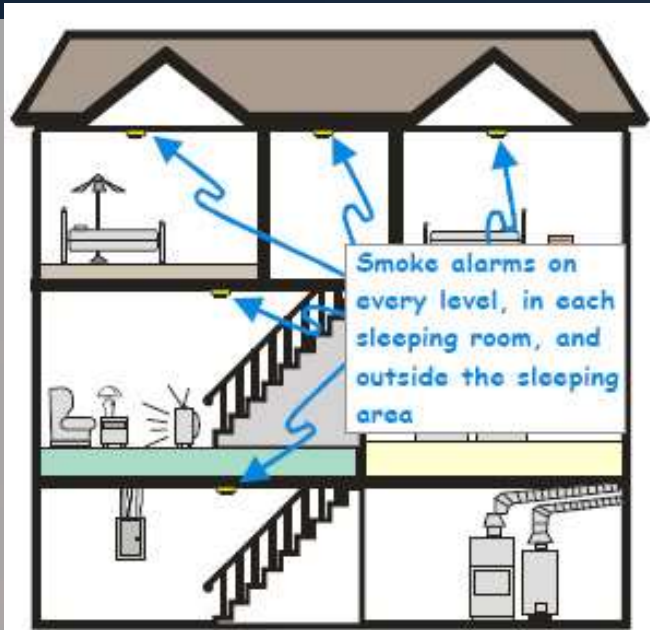


- On average 80% of home fire deaths occur where a smoke alarm is not present or operating
- For example: 39 fire deaths in Minnesota last year. Only six of those deaths happened in homes with a working smoke alarm.



- Breathing smoke can kill you!
- Smoke is toxic.
- If you must escape through smoke, *get low and go* under the smoke.

# Alarm Placement & Maintenance



- Make sure you can hear the alarm in every place in your home.
- They should be loud enough to wake you from sleep.

*Check them* once a month.

*Change the batteries* once a year.

*Replace them* every 10 years.



# Carbon Monoxide Alarms

- Carbon monoxide (CO) is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas. There is no way to detect it without an alarm.
- Symptoms of CO poisoning mimic flu-like symptoms.
  - If you're feeling symptoms, immediately move to an open window or go outdoors.

**High levels of CO can be fatal, causing death within minutes.**





# Fire Extinguishers



- Know how to use them.
- Have them mounted in an obvious spot near an exit.



LETTER SYMBOL	TYPES OF FIRES	PICTURE SYMBOL
	For wood, paper, cloth, trash and other ordinary materials.	
	For gasoline, grease, oil paint and other flammable liquids.	
	For live electrical equipment.	
	For combustible metals. No Current Symbol	

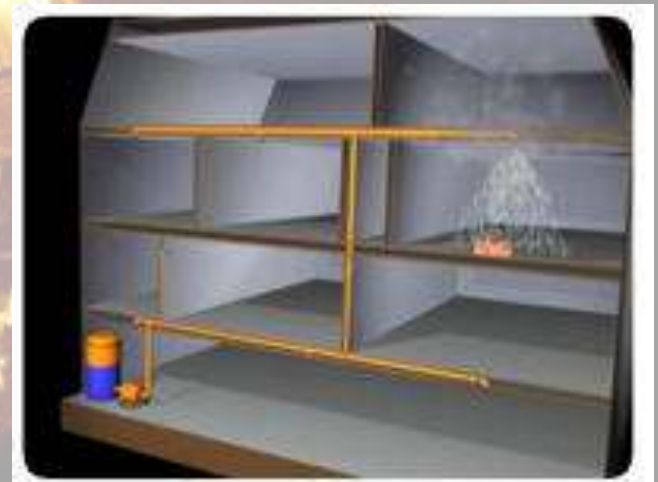
*When in doubt, get out!*

# Residential Fire Sprinkler Systems



*Fire sprinkler systems save lives  
and reduce damage to your property.*

- Only the sprinkler closest to the fire will activate, spraying water directly on the fire.
  - 90% of fires are contained by the operation of just one sprinkler.



# If you have a fire...



- Leave, close the door, and call 9-1-1 from outside.
- Report ALL fires to the fire department, even if you think you put them out!
- Don't ignore alarms!
  - Even if your building has frequent alarms, you need to leave when they go off.
- Once you're out, **STAY OUT!**
  - Don't go back inside for possessions or pets.
  - Notify the fire department if anyone is unaccounted for.

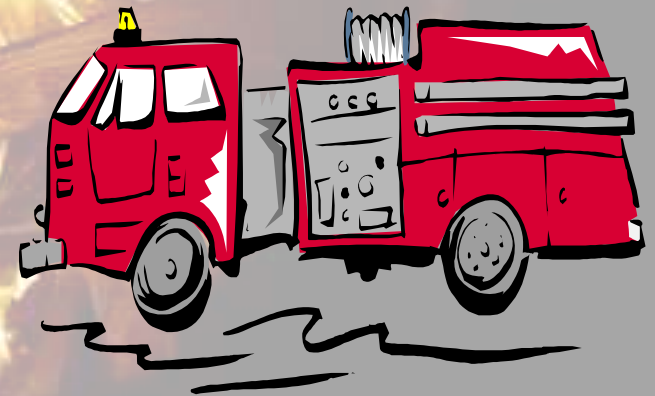


**You never know when it could be a real fire.**

# Summary



- There are many ways to reduce your risk of fire:
  - Stay focused when you're cooking.
  - Use candles responsibly, or not at all.
  - Don't overload electrical sockets or misuse extension cords.
  - If you must smoke, be responsible for your smoking materials.
  - If someone is smoking in or near your home, check to make sure that all smoking materials are properly disposed of.
  - Have a fire safety plan and practice it!
  - Have working smoke and CO alarms.
  - Be responsible.





Rural Municipality of  
**PINEY**



**QUESTIONS?**

**Ina Ruttle**  
**Municipal Fire Chief**  
**[inafire@hotmail.com](mailto:inafire@hotmail.com)**  
**437-2284**