October is National Fire Prevention Month. Each year, more than 4,000 Americans die in fires, more than 25,000 are injured in fires, and more than 100 firefighters are killed while on duty. Eighty percent of all civilian fire deaths occurred in residences. Many of these fires could have been prevented.

Cooking is the third leading cause of fire deaths and the leading cause of injury among people ages 65 and older. Direct loss due to fires is estimated at nearly $8.6 billion annually. Intentionally set structure fires resulted in an estimated $664 million property damage.

In order to protect yourself, it is important to understand the basic characteristics of fire.

- **Fire is FAST.** In just two minutes, a fire can become life-threatening. In five minutes, a residence can be engulfed in flames.
- **Fire is DARK.** Fire produces gases that make you disoriented and drowsy. Instead of being awakened by a fire, you may fall into a deeper sleep. Asphyxiation is the leading cause of fire deaths, exceeding burns by a three-to-one ratio.
- **Fire is HOT.** Heat and smoke from fire can be more dangerous than the flames. Inhaling the superhot air can sear your lungs.

**FIRE SAFETY FACTS**

October is suggested. Replace smoke alarms once every 10 years.

- **Test and clean smoke alarms once a month and replace batteries at least once a year.**

**FIRE PREVENTION TIPS**

**BEFORE A FIRE**

The following are things you can do to protect yourself, your family, and your property in the event of a fire:

- **SMOKE ALARMS AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS**
  - Install smoke alarms. Properly working smoke alarms decrease your chances of dying in a fire by half.
  - Install smoke alarms on every level of your residence, including the basement.
  - Install a working carbon monoxide detector in the common area of the bedrooms.
  - Test and clean smoke alarms once a month and replace batteries at least once a year (each October is suggested). Replace smoke alarms once every 10 years.

- **COOKING SAFETY**
  - Never leave cooking unattended.
  - Always wear short or tight-fitting sleeves when you cook.
  - Keep towels, pot holders and curtains away from flames.
  - Never use the range or oven to heat your home.
  - Have an escape plan. Review escape routes with your family.
  - Make sure windows are not nailed or painted shut.
  - Teach family members to stay low to the floor by crawling, where the air is safer, when escaping from a fire.
  - In a high-rise, never lock or block fire exits or doorways, halls or stairways. Never prop stairway or other fire doors open. Fire doors are meant to slow the fire and give people more time to escape.

- **HEATING SOURCE**
  - If using space heaters at home, place them at least three feet away from flammable/combustible materials like newspapers, magazines, draperies, furniture, etc.
  - Electric space heaters should always be directly plugged into a wall outlet, never an extension cord or power strip.
  - Use only the type of fuel designated for your space heater.

- **MATCHES/LIGHTERS AND SMOKING**
  - Keep matches/lighters away from children.
  - Never smoke in bed or when drowsy or medicated.
  - If you must smoke, do it responsibly.

- **ELECTRICAL WIRING**
  - Inspect extension cords for frayed or exposed wires or loose plugs.
  - Make sure outlets and switches have cover plates and no exposed wiring.
  - Make sure wiring does not run under rugs, over nails, or across high traffic areas.
  - Do not overload extension cords, power strips or outlets.

  **Inspect your home for fire safety and prevention on a regular basis.**

(FIRE SAFETY FACTS ARTICLE CONTINUES AT THE TOP OF PAGE 2)
FIRE SAFETY FACTS
(Continued from page 1)

DURING A FIRE
If your clothes catch on fire, you should:
• Do not assume someone else already called the fire department; get out of the house then call the Fire Department.

DO NOT PANIC
• Do not open the door. Find a second way out, such as a window. If you cannot escape through a window, hang a white sheet outside the window to alert firefighters to your presence.
• Stuff the cracks around the door with towels, rags, bedding or tape and cover vents to keep smoke out.
• If there is a phone in the room where you are trapped, call the fire department again and tell them exactly where you are.
• If the door is cold slowly open it and ensure that fire and/or smoke is not blocking your escape route. If your escape route is blocked, shut the door and use another escape route.

ESCAPE A FIRE
• Once you are out of the building, STAY OUT! Do not go back inside for any reason.
• If you are with a burn victim or are a burn victim yourself call 911, cool and loosely cover your burns until emergency units arrive.

AFTER A FIRE
• Only enter when the fire department tells you it is safe to do so
• Tell the fire department if you know of anyone trapped in the building.
• If you are a tenant contact the landlord.
• If there is a phone in the room where you are trapped, call the fire department again and tell them exactly where you are.

FIRE SAFETY IS YOUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY... FIRE STOPS WITH YOU!

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH


HALLOWEEN RIDDLES
1). Why don’t skeletons watch horror movies?
2). Why don’t skeletons play music in church?
3). What do you get if you divide the circumference of a jack-o-lantern by its diameter?
4). What did the ghost teacher say to the class?
5) What do birds give out on Halloween?

Answers in page 2 Sidebar

AVOIDING ELECTRICAL HAZARDS WHILE WORKING FROM HOME
If you have a home office or work from home please follow these electrical safety tips to keep you and your home safe from electrical hazards.

1) Avoid overloading outlets and do not, under any circumstances, daisy chaining a term that refers to the practice of plugging a power strip or extension cord into a power strip. This is dangerous because an excessive amount of power is being drawn from one single wall outlet, which means the power strip or wall receptacle could easily overload, overheat and catch fire.
2) Unplug appliances when not in use to save energy and minimize the risk of shock or fire
3) Regularly inspect electrical cords and extension cords for damage
4) Extension cords should only be used on a temporary basis; never for a period longer than 90 days. If an extension cord is needed longer than 90 days then a permanent outlet should be installed.
5) Never plug a space heater or fan into an extension cord or power strip.
6) Never run cords under rugs / carpets, doors, or windows
7) Plug in smartly. Make sure cords do not become tripping hazards
8) Keep papers and other potential combustibles at least three feet away from space heaters and other heat sources
9) Make sure you use proper wattage for lamps / lighting
10) Make sure your home has smoke alarms. Test them monthly, change batteries yearly (each October during Fire Prevention Month is suggested), and replace the unit every 10 years

Wherever you work, it’s always important to be safe.

HALLOWEEN RIDDLES

ANSWERS
1. They don’t have the guts!
2. They have no organs!
3. Pumpkin Pi
4. “Watch the board and I’ll go through it again!”
5. Tweets!