

Home Hazard Hunt

Kandiyohi County Health and Human Services

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Do you believe that your home is a safe place to be?

Statistics show that most fires, accidents, and injuries occur in the home.

An important step in family preparedness is the identification of hazards in your home. Once the hazards are identified, it doesn't take much time or effort to make your home a safer place to live. **Getting started:** Using the checklist below, involve the whole family, especially your children, in a home hazard hunt. Remember that anything that can move, break, fall, or burn is a potential hazard. Foresight, imagination, and common sense are the only tools you will need! After identifying what needs to be done, devise a plan to do it.

Kitchen:

Yes/No

- Wear snug-fitting clothes when cooking.
- Do not leave cooking food unattended.
- Keep a pan lid nearby in case of fire.
- Keep cooking areas clean and clear of combustibles.
- Keep cords from dangling.
- Ensure outlets near the kitchen sink are GFI (Ground Fault Interrupt) equipped.
- Keep sharp knives out of reach of children.

Outside:

Yes/No

- Clear dry vegetation and rubbish from around the house.
- Use barbecue grills away from buildings and vegetation.
- Dispose of barbecue briquettes in a metal container.
- Maintain a "greenbelt" around rural buildings.
- Check with the fire department before burning debris or using a burn barrel.

All rooms:

Yes/No

- Ensure floor coverings (rugs, carpets) are properly secured to prevent tripping hazards.
- Separate draw cords on blinds and drapes to reduce strangulation hazards for kids.

Smoking and Matches:

Yes/No

- Store matches / lighters out of reach of children.
- Use large, deep, non-tip ashtrays.
- Never smoke when drowsy or in bed.
- Dispose of ashes and cigarette butts in a metal can at least daily.
- Check furniture for smoldering cigarettes every night, especially after parties.

Electricity:

Yes/No

- Avoid the use of extension cords (if used, ensure the correct wattage rating).
- Plug only one heat producing device into an electrical outlet.
- Ensure cords are not placed under rugs.
- Verify circuits are not overloaded.
- Replace damaged cords, plugs, sockets.
- Use bulbs with the correct wattage for lamps and fixtures.
- Check fuses / circuit breakers for the correct amperage ratings.
Do not override / bypass fuses or circuit breakers

Clothes Washer and Dryer:

Yes/No

- Verify that appliances are properly grounded.
- Ensure lint filter is clean and serviceable.
Check vent hose and vent line to ensure they are
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- Ensure room exits are unobstructed.

clean and provide unobstructed airflow.

Garage / Attic / Shed:

Yes/No

- Use gasoline as a motor fuel only, and never use or store it inside the home.
- Keep only a small quantity of gasoline, if necessary, in an approved container locked in the garage or shed.
- Keep flammable liquids such as paints and thinners in their original containers and store on or near the ground and away from sources of heat, sparks, or flame.
- Store used oily rags in sealed metal containers.
- Never store combustibles such as newspapers and magazines in your attic.

Smoke Detector:

Yes/No

- Installed properly on every level?
- Tested monthly?
- Battery replaced every 6 months (or per manufacturer's recommendations)

Fire Extinguisher:

Yes/No

- Verify that an all purpose fire extinguisher (class ABC) is maintained in an accessible location.
- Ensure that all occupants know how to use it.
- Are additional fire extinguishers kept in the kitchen, garage, near furnace, and sleeping area?

Heating Equipment:

Yes/No

- Ensure fireplace inserts and gas / wood stoves comply with local codes.
- Clean and inspect chimney annually.
- Dispose of ashes in metal container.
- Keep clothes, furnishings, and electrical cords at least 12" from wall heaters and 36" from portable heaters.
- Service furnace annually.
- Set water heater thermostat at 120 degrees F.

"Practice Drills" are a great way to help your family plan and remember what to do in case of a disaster or emergency.