

# Federal Way Fire Department

POSTAL CUSTOMER

ECWRSS  
U.S. POSTAGEPAID  
FEDERAL WAY, WA  
PERMIT NO. 821

31617 1st Ave S, Federal Way, WA 98003



In this issue:

- ✓ Smoke Alarms
- ✓ Home Fire Drills
- ✓ Fire Marshal's Office
- ✓ Evacuations for Seniors
- ✓ Children and Fire

**Change Your  
Clock  
Change Your  
Battery  
October 31**

## The Fire Prevention Division

Your fire department has a group of individuals that work full time on keeping our community safe through fire prevention efforts. It is accepted throughout the nation that the best way to reduce the impact of fires is to prevent them from occurring altogether.



L to R: Bryan Peterson, Asst. Fire Marshal, Greg Brozek, Chris Ingham, Laine McGee, Fire Marshal Jerry Thorson, and Tom Raymond.

The Fire Prevention Division includes the Fire Marshal, An Assistant Fire Marshal, four Deputy Fire Marshals, and a secretary. The division is located within the new city hall, working closely with the city's staff to improve our customer service to the public.

*Continued on page 3*

## Kitchen Fires



This fire started on the stove when food caught on fire and spread to the walls and cabinets. Unattended cooking is the number one reason houses burn in Federal Way. Read more about this problem on page 2.

## It's Fire Prevention Week! Test Your Smoke Alarms October 3 - 9, 2004

This year's theme for Fire Prevention Week (October 3-9) is "It's Fire Prevention Week: Test Your Smoke Alarms." The Federal Way Fire Department is joining with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and other safety advocates this fall to remind you about fire safety during Fire Prevention Week.

Smoke alarms are the most effective early warning devices available. Because fire can grow and spread so quickly, having working smoke alarms in the home can mean the difference between life and death. But these life saving devices are only effective when they're working properly. Smoke alarms with batteries that are dead, disconnected, or missing can't alert people to the danger of smoke and fire.

Here are some tips from NFPA and the Federal Way Fire Department:

### Push It!

- Test your alarms once a month, following the manufacturer's instructions. Generally you need only push a button for a few seconds.
- Don't disable smoke alarms even temporarily. If the smoke alarm is sounding "nuisance alarms," try relocating farther from kitchens or bathrooms, or replace the alarm with one that has a pause, silencer or hush button.



*Continued on page 3*

## Kitchens, cont.

Continued from page 1

Most house fires in Federal Way start in the kitchen. Cooking fires are the number one cause of kitchen fires followed by electrical malfunctions. These fires are easy to prevent.

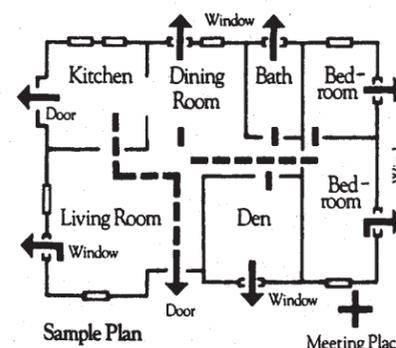
- Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking. If you must leave, set a timer to remind you to come back. Always stay in the kitchen if you are heating oil.
- Heat oil on low or medium heat, never high. Oil will smoke and burst into flames when it is hot enough. Some people falsely believe that there must be a spark or flame to burn oil.
- Keep hot pads and a lid to the pan nearby.
- Keep your appliances in good working order.
- Don't overload outlets.
- Unplug appliances with heating elements when you are not using them, such as the toaster. If the appliance breaks it may continue to draw electricity causing the coffee maker, for example, to continue to heat up, eventually causing a fire.
- If you do have a food fire, the fastest way to put out the fire is to smother it by putting the lid on the pan. Turn the stove off and let everything cool down.  
  
Water will only spread an oil fire and picking up the pan often causes burns and spreads the fire. Baking soda and fire extinguishers work but take more time and can put you in greater danger.
- If the nearby walls or cabinets are warm, have soot or scorch marks on them, call 911 so a firefighter can make sure the fire isn't smoldering in the wall or cabinet.
- If the fire has spread beyond the pan or if you are unsure if you can put the fire out, leave the house immediately. Yell for others to get out and close the door behind you.
- Call 911 from a neighbor's house and wait outside.

## Home Escape Plans

Smoke alarms give you warning of a fire, but that isn't enough. A home escape plan is also important.

### Make a Plan

1. Make a map of the house. Show all doors, walls and windows. Mark where smoke alarms and fire extinguishers are located.
2. Show two ways out of each room. The first and best way is the door. A second way may be another door or a window.
3. Mark your meeting place. A good meeting place is away from the building but not necessarily across the street. Some examples are the mailbox, a specific tree, the front sidewalk or the end of the driveway.
4. Make sure everyone knows the plan and where to meet. Have everyone listen to the smoke alarm and talk about what they should do when they hear it.



### Practice Your Plan

Have everyone, from kids to grandparents, practice the plan. If someone needs assistance, practice helping them. It's a good idea to practice twice a year. Share the plan with family and sitters that stay at your house.

1. Sound the alarm. Push the test button for a few seconds to start the drill and then evacuate with the rest of the family.
2. Immediately leave the home.
3. Take the safest exit route. If you must escape through smoke, crawl low, under the smoke.
4. Check closed doors for heat. With the back of your hand to feel the door, the doorknob and the crack between the door and door frame to make sure there is not a fire on the other side. If the door is cool, open it slowly. Be ready to slam the door closed if heat and smoke come in. Use your alternate route.
5. Go to the meeting place to be sure everyone has gotten out safely. If someone is missing, wait at your meeting place and have one person tell the firefighters when they arrive.
6. Never go back into the building until the fire department says it's safe.
7. Send one person to a neighbor's to call 911 or use a cell phone from the meeting place.



### To the citizens of the Federal Way Fire District:

On behalf of the Board of Fire Commissioners and the entire Federal Way Fire Department, thank you for your support in the recent election. We are humbled and honored by your positive statement on behalf of the Fire Department.

We will remain ever dedicated to the high level of care we provide to you and we are proud to provide you with essential fire department services.

Thank you again,  
Chief Allen D Church  
Fire Chief/Administrator

## Working Side by Side

While we aren't part of city government, a recent study found that the process to build a new building could be improved by having the fire department and the city work more closely together. So when the city moved into their new facility, we decided to join them.

This has dramatically improved the communication between the Fire Prevention Division and the city's inspectors. Our ability to serve the public has improved as a result of this effort between the fire department and the city.

We are located on the second floor, North side, at City Hall, 33325 8th Ave S. When you check in at the front desk, they will notify an inspector to meet you.

In the new lobby, there are tables and conference rooms where we can review your plans with you and discuss questions you may have.

## Test Your Smoke Alarms, cont.

*Continued from page 1*

### Install It!

- Smoke alarms need to be installed on every level of the home, including the basement, and outside each sleeping area. Even better is to also have an alarm in each sleeping room and have all alarms interconnected.
- Mount alarms high on walls or ceilings because smoke rises.
- Smoke alarms with a vibrating pad or flashing light are available for the deaf and hard of hearing. Additionally, smoke alarms with a strobe light outside the house to catch the attention of neighbors, and emergency call systems for summoning help are also available.
- Audible alarms should pause with a small window of silence between each cycle so that blind or visually impaired people can listen to instructions or voices of others.

### Clean It!

- Vacuum or dust your alarms, following the manufacturer's instructions, to keep them working properly.

### Replace It!

- Batteries in smoke alarms should be replaced once a year, or as soon as the alarm "chirps" warning that the battery is low.
- The entire smoke alarms needs to be replaced every 10 years. Consider installing smoke alarms with "long-life" (10-year) batteries.

## Fire Prevention, cont.

*Continued from page 1*

The division's primary duties include reviewing and approving plans for fire alarms, extinguishing systems, fire lanes, fire hydrant locations and other building features for new construction, and improvements to existing commercial buildings. Prevention personnel also conduct fire code permit inspections, work closely with the city inspectors, and serve as fire investigators conducting fire origin and cause investigations.

A normal work day for a Deputy Fire Marshal starts out with researching the codes and other details for the inspections that are due that day. There's time spent on writing reports for fire investigations. Each day includes visits to construction sites working with the construction manager to ensure that the plans are being followed. Now that we're co-located in city hall time is also spent in face to face meetings to ensure that the developers and citizens needs are met.

If you have any comments, questions or concerns for the fire prevention division please call us at 253-839-6234 and press 1 for the fire prevention division or contact us via e-mail through our website at [www.federalwayfire.org](http://www.federalwayfire.org).



## A Senior Moment

[Excerpt from Fire Safety Lasts a Lifetime: From the US Fire Administration – A Fire Safety Factsheet for Older Adults and their Caregivers.](#)

People over the age of 65 face the greatest risk of dying in a fire. On average, 959 Americans age 65 and over died in home fires and 2,425 were injured in fire-related incidences.

### Why are Older Adults at Risk?

Decreased mobility, sight, and hearing may limit a person's ability to take the quick action necessary to escape during a fire emergency.

Depending on physical limitations, many of the actions an individual can take to protect themselves from the dangers of fire may require help from a caregiver, neighbor, or outside source.

### Install and Maintain Smoke Alarms

Make sure smoke alarms are installed on each level of your home and outside all sleeping areas. The chances of surviving a home fire almost doubles with the initial warning from a smoke alarm.

Test them monthly and replace the batteries at least once a year.

If you cannot find help installing your alarm or changing the battery, please call the fire department at 253-839-6234.

### Plan Your Escape

Plan and practice your home fire escape. Considering your capabilities is a key element to fire safety!

Know at least two exits from every room.

If you use a walker or wheelchair, check all exits to be sure they can go through the doorways.

### Don't Isolate Yourself

Speak to your family members, building manager, or neighbors about your fire safety plan and practice it with them.

### Live Near an Exit

Although you can live where you choose, you'll be safest on the ground floor near an exit.

If you would like a home fire safety inspection (and a fall safety survey) call the fire department at 253-839-6234. We can offer suggestions about smoke alarm placement and maintenance.

## We Can Help When a Child Sets a Fire

"It was just a little fire" sounds innocent enough, but to those who have seen the devastation fire causes know how dangerous this attitude can be.

Last year in Federal Way an entire house was destroyed by fire and children narrowly saved by a smoke alarm when a young child played with a lighter. A young boy experimenting with a lighter started a fire that sent most of his family to the hospital for smoke inhalation. Teenagers narrowly escaped injury when lighting fireworks doused in gasoline.

Most children who are injured or killed by fire started the fire themselves. Many children and adults believe they can safely control fire, and often they do. Many children are lucky and are not injured when they play with fire. Fire spreads very quickly and can easily become uncontrollable.

Fire Stoppers of Federal Way is part of a nation-wide effort to help families by intervening when a child has set a fire or shown curiosity with fire and fire-starting tools. Studies have shown that 80% of children who attend an educational intervention stop playing with fire.

Trained educators meet with the child and their parents/guardians to discuss the current behavior, the danger of fire and the possible consequences of fire. We explore possible reasons for the fire play and provide education for both parent and child on decision making, responsibility, peer pressure, and accessibility. The education is about 1 ½ hours long with a 30 minute follow-up meeting about one week later to review the homework.

Please call 253-869-6234 if you are concerned about your child. There is no charge for this service.

### Go on a Round-Up!

With the child, decide on a reward for each match or lighter they find. Rewards might be money, candy, gold stars, etc. Search each room and the garage and round up all matches and lighters. Remember to look in drawers and cupboards. Be thorough. Get rid of the matches and lighters. Give the child a reward for each lighter, matchbook or wooden match found (but only if the matches have not been lit).

## Emergency Preparedness

### Don't Miss This Opportunity

Community Emergency Response Team, or CERT, training gives you the essential skills you may need when disaster strikes. Learn how to be better prepared, put out fires, treat injuries, search buildings and work as a team.

There is a \$25 fee for this course. Those who attend at least seven of the eight sessions will receive a CERT manual, class handouts, a hardhat, a safety vest, a CERT patch, and a certificate of completion from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the City of Federal Way.

Class is held on Thursday nights, generally from 6:00 – 9:00 pm, beginning September 23 and running for seven weeks. The eighth and final class is held on Saturday, November 6 from 9:00 am – noon.

To register, call the Volunteer and Neighborhood Program Coordinator at (253) 661-4023 or get an application at the City of Federal Way's web site: [www.ci.federal-way.wa.us](http://www.ci.federal-way.wa.us).

## Safety Show October 9

The Federal Way Fire Department will host its annual Safety Show October 9 from 10:00 am – 5:00 pm at The Commons of Federal Way (formerly the SeaTac Mall).

- Come for information about fire safety, injury prevention, disaster preparedness and crime prevention.
- Purchase a custom-fit helmet from 11:00 am – 2:00 pm. Helmets fit children and adults and are \$5 for the bike style and \$7 for the multi-sport style. Wearer must be present for custom fit.
- Escape from a smoke-filled house.
- Tour emergency vehicles including a fire engine and an ambulance.
- Donate blood.

## Calendar

### September 23

American Red Cross Family Disaster Preparation.  
6:30 pm - 8:00 pm, Free.  
Register by calling 253-839-6234.

CERT classes begin. Register by calling 253-661-4023.

### October 9

Safety Show at The Commons  
10:00 am - 5:00 pm

October 12 Adult CPR  
October 16 First Aid  
October 18 Pediatric CPR  
November 9 Adult CPR  
November 13 First Aid  
November 15 Pediatric CPR

For all CPR and First Aid classes, call 253-529-7203.

### December 12

American Red Cross Winter Preparedness.  
6:30 pm - 8:00 pm, Free.  
Register by calling 253-839-6234.

## Tell us what you think!

Please send any comments or questions to:

Public Education Division  
Federal Way Fire Department  
31617 1st Ave S  
Federal Way, WA 98003

Or send an e-mail through the question and comment link on the contact page of our website:

[www.federalwayfire.org](http://www.federalwayfire.org)