



READY TO RESPOND

NEWSLETTER



CITY OF CHARLESTON

OCTOBER 2019

CHARLESTON FIRE DEPT

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Fire Prevention Week

Since 1922, the NFPA has sponsored the public observance of Fire Prevention Week. In 1925, President Calvin Coolidge proclaimed Fire Prevention Week a national observance, making it the longest-running public health observance in our country. During Fire Prevention Week, children, adults, and teachers learn how to stay safe in case of a fire. Firefighters provide lifesaving public education in an effort to drastically decrease casualties caused by fires.

Fire Prevention Week is observed each year during the week of October 9th in commemoration of the Great Chicago Fire, which began on October 8, 1871, and caused devastating damage. This horrific conflagration killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures, and burned more than 2,000 acres of land.

<https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Staying-safe/Preparedness/Fire-Prevention-Week/About>



Fire Safety Tips from the Red Cross

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas
- Test smoke alarms every month.
- Talk with family members about a fire escape plan and practice the plan
- If a fire occurs, GET OUT, STAY OUT, AND CALL FOR HELP. Never go back inside for anything



Overview of the U.S. fire experience

1319500

Fires responded to in 2017



How often a U.S. fire department responded to a fire in 2017.

499000

Structure fires in 2017



Percentage of structure fires that occurred in home structures

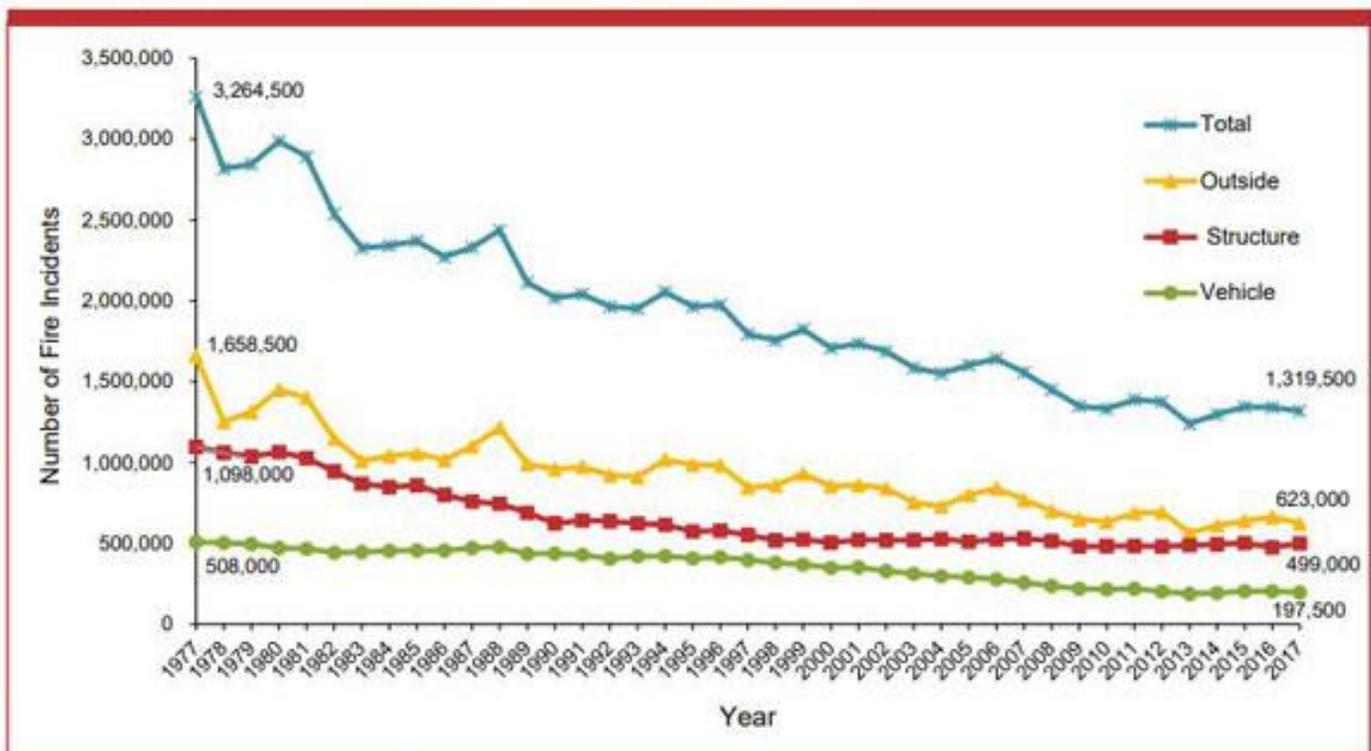
3400

Civilian fire deaths in 2017.



Civilian fire deaths that occurred in the home.

- Public fire departments responded to 1,319,500 fires in 2017, a slight decrease of 2% from the previous year.
- Every 24 seconds, a fire department in the United States responds to a fire somewhere in the nation. A fire occurs in a structure at the rate of one every 63 seconds, and a home fire occurs every 88 seconds.
- Seventy-seven percent of all fire deaths occurred in the home, a decrease of 4% compared to 2016.
- Home fires were responsible for 10,600 civilian injuries, or 72% of all civilian injuries, in 2017.
- An estimated \$23 billion in property damage occurred as a result of fire in 2017, a large increase, as this number includes a \$10 billion loss in wildfires in Northern California.
- An estimated 22,500 structure fires were intentionally set in 2017, an increase of 13% over the year before.





Fire Safety at Your Home Away from Home

Peer-to-peer hospitality services, such as Airbnb, Vacation Rentals by Owner and other types of vacation rentals are not regulated in the same way as hotels. Requirements vary widely across jurisdictions. Act as your own safety advocate and know before you go. Be sure the following safety measures are addressed.

SAFETY TIPS

- ✓ Working smoke alarms are in every sleeping room. They are outside each separate sleeping area. They are on every level of the home.
- ✓ Working smoke alarms are interconnected, if possible. When one alarm sounds, they all sound.
- ✓ Portable fire extinguishers are in the home and are easy to reach.
- ✓ Working carbon monoxide alarms are outside each separate sleeping area. They are on every level of the home and in other locations as required by laws, codes, or standards.
- ✓ The owner has posted a floor plan. It notes all escape routes and exits and provides emergency contact information.
- ✓ Everyone knows the address of the home.
- ✓ Everyone staying in the home has identified two ways out of every room and how to escape in an emergency.
- ✓ All doors and windows that lead outside are able to be opened.
- ✓ An outside meeting place has been chosen. It is a safe distance away from the home.
- ✓ Everyone knows how to call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number from a cell phone from outside.
- ✓ If smoking is allowed, a smoking area has been designated and is well away from the structure. Deep, sturdy ashtrays have been provided.
- ✓ All pathways are free and clear of tripping hazards.
- ✓ Electrical outlets are free from multiple cords and adaptors.
- ✓ The stovetop is clear. Anything that can catch fire is not near the stovetop, such as curtains and towels.

WINDOW AND DOOR ALERT!

Be on the lookout for rooms with tiny windows. These are too small to serve as a means of escape.

Security bars on doors and windows can trap people in a fire. Make sure any security bars have quick-release devices. Tools, keys, or special efforts should not be needed to open them.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Peer-to-peer hospitality services are not regulated in the same way as hotels. Requirements vary widely across jurisdictions. Do your homework before making a reservation. Check online to see your travel destination's regulations for rental properties. Ask your host if the property meets the regulations. Discuss other safety concerns you may have.

Check the forecast in case of storms that could cause power outages; assure the property has equipment (batteries, lanterns, etc.) in the event of a power outage.

Grilling Safety

There's nothing like outdoor grilling. It's one of the most popular ways to cook food. But, a grill placed too close to anything that can burn is a fire hazard. They can be very hot, causing burn injuries. Follow these simple tips and you will be on the way to safe grilling.

SAFETY TIPS

- » Propane and charcoal BBQ grills should only be used outdoors.
- » The grill should be placed well away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
- » Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the grill area.
- » Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grills and in trays below the grill.
- » Never leave your grill unattended.
- » Always make sure your gas grill lid is open before lighting it.

CHARCOAL GRILLS

- » There are several ways to get the charcoal ready to use. Charcoal chimney starters allow you to start the charcoal using newspaper as a fuel.
- » If you use a starter fluid, use only charcoal starter fluid. Never add charcoal fluid or any other flammable liquids to the fire.
- » Keep charcoal fluid out of the reach of children and away from heat sources.
- » There are also electric charcoal starters, which do not use fire. Be sure to use an extension cord for outdoor use.
- » When you are finished grilling, let the coals completely cool before disposing in a metal container.

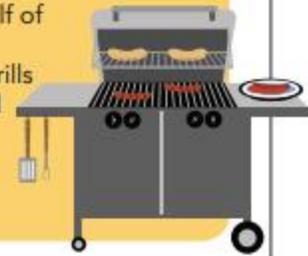
PROPANE Grills

Check the gas tank hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year. Apply a light soap and water solution to the hose. A propane leak will release bubbles. If your grill has a gas leak, by smell or the soapy bubble test, and there is no flame, turn off both the gas tank and the grill. If the leak stops, get the grill serviced by a professional before using it again. If the leak does not stop, call the fire department. **If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department.** Do not move the grill.

If the flame goes out, turn the grill and gas off and wait at least **5 minutes** before re-lighting it.

FACTS

- ! July is the peak month for grill fires.
- ! Roughly half of the injuries involving grills are thermal burns.



Smoke Alarms at Home

SMOKE ALARMS ARE A KEY PART of a home fire escape plan. When there is a fire, smoke spreads fast. Working smoke alarms give you early warning so you can get outside quickly.

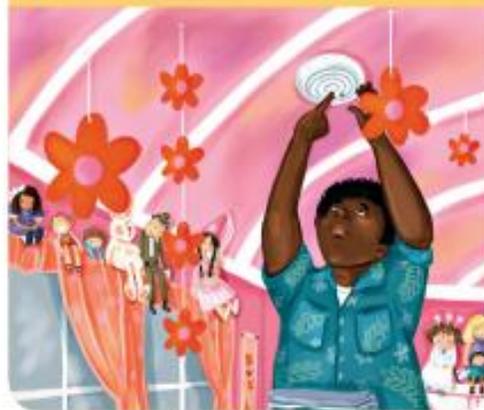


SAFETY TIPS

- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom. They should also be outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. Install alarms in the basement.
- Large homes may need extra smoke alarms.
- It is best to use interconnected smoke alarms. When one smoke alarm sounds, they all sound.
- Test all smoke alarms at least once a month. Press the test button to be sure the alarm is working.
- Current alarms on the market employ different types of technology including multi-sensing, which could include smoke and carbon monoxide combined.
- Today's smoke alarms will be more technologically advanced to respond to a multitude of fire conditions, yet mitigate false alarms.
- A smoke alarm should be on the ceiling or high on a wall. Keep smoke alarms away from the kitchen to reduce false alarms. They should be at least 10 feet (3 meters) from the stove.
- People who are hard-of-hearing or deaf can use special alarms. These alarms have strobe lights and bed shakers.
- Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.

FACTS

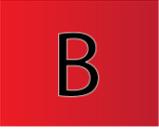
- ❗ A closed door may slow the spread of smoke, heat, and fire.
- ❗ Smoke alarms should be installed inside every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level. Smoke alarms should be connected so when one sounds, they all sound. Most homes do not have this level of protection.
- ❗ Roughly 3 out of 5 fire deaths happen in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.



- Pull the pin.
- Aim the nozzle at the base of the fire. Hitting the tops of the flame with the extinguisher won't be effective. You got to smother the sucker at its base.
- Squeeze the trigger. In a controlled manner, squeeze the trigger to release the agent.
- Sweep from side to side. Sweep the nozzle from side to side until the fire is put out. Keep aiming at the base while you do so. Most extinguishers will give you about 10-20 seconds of discharge time.



Types of Extinguishers

		Ordinary Combustibles	Wood, Paper, Cloth, Etc.
		Flammable Liquids	Grease, Oil, Paint, Solvents
		Live Electrical Equipment	Electrical Panel, Motor, Wiring, Etc.
		Combustible Metal	Magnesium, Aluminum, Etc.
		Commercial Cooking Equipment	Cooking Oils, Animal Fats, Vegetable Oils