



Riverdale Fire-Rescue Department

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Fire Prevention
Public Education
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Special Operations
Emergency Medical
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Causes of Fires in Domiciles or Residences

“Residential Fire Prevention is a Daily Commitment”

Let's be aware of the main causes of fires in residential homes in the United States. Carelessness causes most fires in residential homes. Does your home here in Riverdale pass this basic checklist?

1. Chimney Fire - can break out when too hot of a fire is kindled in the furnace or fireplace.
2. Attic Fire - can start when an overheated chimney ignites combustible materials stored in attic spaces.
3. Fire can ignite within “Paint Cans” that has a combustible mixture - if they are stored in warm basements or other confined spaces with poor ventilation.
4. Fire From Hot Ashes - can flare up when they are stored in an improper container.
5. Fire in a Closet/Storage - can begin when overloaded fuse box ignites clothes or rags. Additional closet fires - can start when spontaneous combustion can cause a fire. Note: “Spontaneous Combustion” is when a substance with a relatively low ignition temperature begins to release heat, which may occur in several ways, such as oxidation or fermentation. The heat is unable to escape and the temperature of the material rises. The temperature of the material rises above its ignition point or lastly ... Combustion begins if a sufficiently strong oxidizer, such as oxygen, is present.
6. Fire in Waste Paper - can begin if trash is stored carelessly near an ignition sources or if something like a cigarette ash is still hot enough to ignite the combustible contents.
7. Unattended Cooking – is a leading cause of home fires ... never leave anything cooking unattended.
8. Fire from Poor Wiring - in an appliance or wall can quickly spread to nearby curtains and other combustible materials.
9. Electrical shorts – can cause fire if extension cords are frayed and worn.
10. Fire in a Chair/Couch or Mattress - can start when a careless smoker drops hot tobacco ashes on surface areas.
11. Flashback Fire - starts when cleaning fluid fumes from a sink or tub reach the furnace or hot water tank pilot.
12. Fire in a Grease pan or Deep Fryer - on a stove can ignite nearby curtains, cabinets or other combustibles.
13. Fire in a Wastebasket - can flare up if hot cigarette ashes are emptied into it with other combustibles.
14. Curtains or Furniture Can be Set Ablaze - by a child playing with matches or a lighter or an adult with a cigarette.
15. Fire in Bedding - can happen when a careless smoker falls asleep in bed.

Note: Highlighted point of fire prevention should be ... “Good housekeeping is a basic way to prevent fires in residential homes”.

-Tyrone Jarrett, Sr., Fire Chief -