

CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Amador-El Dorado Unit

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Time Out for Fire Safety

Camino – The holiday season is upon us and life can get a little crazy trying to prepare for it. Before the onslaught of family, friends, cooking and shopping, “take a few minutes to think about fire safety. This may sound obvious but with the crazy pace of the holidays, reminding ourselves to “think fire safety” can help avert a holiday disaster” cautions the Amador-El Dorado Unit Chief Kelly Keenan who adds “every year we respond to fires that occur when someone has been distracted. Leaving cooking food on a stove or in an oven and forgetting about it after you leave the kitchen is the leading cause of house fires. Forgetting to blow out lit candles before leaving a room or placing decorations or packages too close to a wood stove or other heat source also cause numerous house fires. In this “connected” world we live in, we are often multitasking around the clock. Whether it is texting family and friends directions to your home while cooking a holiday meal for 20 people and taking advantage of great internet sales all from your smartphone, all too often we are preoccupied with several things at any given time. Take a few minutes to review these common sense fire and life safety principles with friends and family. It could save your life and the lives of your loved ones.”

Tips to live by:

- Make sure your smoke alarms are linked to one another and are in good working order. If your alarms go off, investigate to make sure you know the source of the smoke or fire and take appropriate action.
- If you have a fire extinguisher, make certain you know how to use it. Think of the acronym **P.A.S.S** = **P**ull the locking pin out of the handle, **A**im the nozzle/hose at the base of the fire, **S**queeze the handle of the extinguisher and **S**weep back and forth until the fire is out. Do not hesitate to empty the extinguisher on the fire. *ALWAYS* call 9-1-1 and have fire department personnel check for any residual “hold over fires” (smoldering fires).
- Use battery operated candles instead of traditional candles. They are safer, last longer and don’t spill melted wax all over your furniture.
- Keep all flammable materials (such as curtains, blankets, trees, gifts, etc.) a minimum of 3 feet away from all heating sources such as your wood burning stove, space heaters, etc.
- Review what to do if your clothes catch on fire. **Stop** (NEVER run)-**Drop** (to your knees and lie on your stomach on the ground. Cover your face/mouth with your hands, close your eyes)-**Roll** (back and forth until the fire is smothered out). Flush with plenty of clean, cold water and *ALWAYS* call 9-1-1 and have medical personnel assess your burn injuries.
- Practice your home exit drill with your family and review and practice your exit drill with any visiting friends and relatives. Make sure everyone knows where your meeting place is and in the event of a house fire, remember to Crawl Low Under the Smoke filling your home. Never stop to grab personal items, get out of the house and stay out. Call 9-1-1 from outside the house, and let emergency services know if everyone has exited the house or if someone is still missing and presumed inside.

Taking a few minutes out of your busy day now to review what you can do to be fire safe can mean the difference between life and death. “It is the simple things we do every day that can get us into trouble especially when we are distracted, tired and overwhelmed. Please help us make this a joyful holiday season” says Chief Keenan.

For more information on other fire and life safety topics, please visit the CAL FIRE website at www.fire.ca.gov.

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