



REAL ESTATE

MARY MITCHELL MILLER

Fire Prevention Tips

In the last edition of this newsletter, we recommended some winter vent maintenance tips to keep in mind. This month, we're focusing on fire prevention and our business insurance provider (MMG) recently shared some excellent Fire Prevention Tips that we thought are important enough to share.

- Install smoke detectors on each floor of your home and in every bedroom. Vermont law requires **photo-electric** detectors are in place at the time of any real estate sale. Don't wait until then to install them!
- Change the batteries in smoke detectors twice a year and test them every month.
- Keep an ABC-class fire extinguisher in the kitchen, garage, and any room with a heating device.
- Review fire escape plans with family members often.



According to MMG, cooking causes about 50% of home fires in the United States.

- Never leave cooking pans unattended, especially when cooking with oil.
- Never throw water on a grease/oil fire.
- Do not cook when overtired or inebriated.

Heating is the next leading cause of home fires, especially in the winter. And, especially in colder climates like Vermont, where a variety of heat sources are used, sometimes simultaneously.

- Have your furnace/boiler, and wood and pellet stoves properly serviced EACH year
- AND all chimneys/flues cleaned by a qualified contractor.
- Install only UL-approved woodstoves or fireplaces with clearances recommended by the manufacturer.
- Woodstoves need to be on their own separate flue.
- Burn only seasoned wood to reduce creosote buildup.

- Dispose of ashes in a non-combustible, metal container. (Note: And, even better is to wait until they are cold (i.e., the day after having a fire)).

Electrical causes of fire are common too.

- Do not overload extension cords or join them together for extra length.
- Throw away any aging cords or electrical devices with broken or worn cords.
- Clean out dryer lint traps after every load, and clean out or inspect dryer exhaust vent twice a year.
- If fuses are present, replace with circuit breakers panel as soon as possible and make sure that you're wiring meets current electrical codes.

And, finally, smoking and candles also lead to house fires.

- Never smoke in fire or when sleepy.
- Never smoke in a garage or near flammable materials.
- Never burn candles in a closed area, near flammable materials, or leave unattended.
- Always place candles on a fire resistant surface and keep the wicks trimmed.

~ end ~