



# Safety Tips for Mobile Home Owners

## An Information Bulletin for Sunnyvale Mobile Home Owners

### Electrical

Electrical system malfunctions and heating fires are the leading causes of fire in manufactured homes. Together, they account for one-third of manufactured housing fires. Electrical distribution fires occur nearly twice as often in manufactured homes as in one- and two-family dwellings.

### Keep smoke alarms working

Never remove or disable a smoke alarm. If you experience frequent nuisance alarms, consider relocating the alarm further away from kitchen cooking fumes or bathroom steam. Selecting a photoelectric smoke alarm for the areas nearest kitchens and baths may reduce the number of nuisance alarms experienced. As an alternative, a smoke alarm with a silencing means is allowed to be installed if it is within 20 feet of a cooking appliance. Test all smoke alarms at least once a month by pushing the "test" button. It is not necessary to use smoke or a real flame to test the smoke alarm's operability, and it is risky to do so. Replace batteries at least once a year, and when the alarm "chirps," signaling low battery power. Occasionally dust or lightly vacuum smoke alarms.

### Make sure you have enough smoke alarms

If your older manufactured home does not have smoke alarms in or near every sleeping room and in or near the family/living area(s), immediately install new alarms and fresh batteries to protect these rooms. For the best protection, interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.

### Install carbon monoxide alarms

Carbon monoxide is formed from the incomplete lighting of any flame-fueled (i.e., not electric) device including ranges, ovens, clothes dryers, furnaces, fireplaces, grills, space heaters, vehicles, and water heaters. If you have any of fuel-fired appliances in the home or an attached garage, install carbon monoxide alarms outside of each sleeping area or bedroom and on each level of the home.

### Plan your escape

Know ahead of time how you will get out if you have a fire. [Develop an escape plan](#) that includes having an alternate exit out of every room. Make sure you can open and get out of windows and doors. All post-HUD Standard manufactured homes are required to provide windows designed for use as secondary escape routes for the bedroom. Familiarize yourself with their operation and don't block access to them. Immediately fix any windows that have been painted or nailed shut, doors that are stubborn or "stuck," and locks that are difficult to operate. Security bars or grates over windows or doors should have quick-release devices installed inside, which allow you to open them in an emergency. Hold a fire drill twice a year to practice your plan.

## **Cooking**

Unattended cooking is the leading cause of cooking fires in U.S. homes. Supervise older children who cook and stay in the kitchen when heating anything on the stove. Keep cooking surfaces clean and place anything that can burn well away from the range. Heat oil slowly and know how to slide a lid over a pan if you experience a grease fire.

## **Heating**

Keep space heaters at least three feet away from anything that can burn. When purchasing new space heaters, select appliances with automatic shut-off switches. Turn off portable space heaters before falling asleep or when leaving the room. Supervise children and pets when space heaters are operating.

## **Smoking**

If you have smokers in your home, ask them to smoke outside. Wherever people smoke, set out large, non-tip ashtrays on level surfaces and empty them frequently. Thoroughly douse butts with water before discarding.

## **Protect yourself from intruders**

Install outdoor lighting to deter intruders, including would-be arsonists. Keep gasoline, charcoal lighter and other flammable liquids locked in an outdoor shed. Don't store items underneath your home. Store firewood away from your home and keep trash and other flammable debris cleaned up. Report any suspicious activity in your neighborhood.

## **Combustible Material Storage**

Keep the lot area and the area under, around, or on your unit and accessory buildings or structures free from an accumulation of refuse, rubbish, paper, leaves, brush or other combustible material.

## **For More Information**

[FirePrevention.InSunnyvale.com/Fire Prevention and Public Education/Mobile Home Parks](http://FirePrevention.InSunnyvale.com/Fire%20Prevention%20and%20Public%20Education/Mobile%20Home%20Parks)

Email: [fireprevention@sunnyvale.ca.gov](mailto:fireprevention@sunnyvale.ca.gov)

Phone: 408-730-7212

For specific questions regarding carbon monoxide detector requirements in mobile/manufactured home please contact Shawn Huff of the California Housing and Community Development Department at (916) 327-2816.