



Smoking Fires Are Preventable



www.ocfa.org

Smoking fires include fires started by smoking materials and fires started by heat sources used to light smoking materials. In Orange County, smoking fires are the second leading cause of residential fires, fire deaths and fire injuries.

Smoking fires occur most often when:

1. Smoking materials are used when sleepy or under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medication.

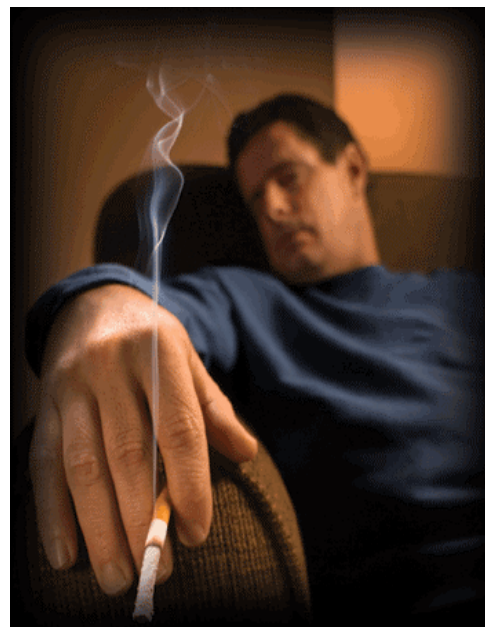
Impaired smokers are much more likely to drop smoking materials onto furniture or other flammable materials, increasing the risk of fire. Drugs and alcohol also slow reaction time, making it more difficult to escape flames or smoke once a fire ignites.

2. The heat source (match, lighter) used to light smoking materials gets out of control.

Many fires start when matches are improperly or carelessly thrown away.

3. Smoking materials are discarded in improper containers or containers with other flammable items.

Unless properly extinguished, smoking materials continue to smolder and emit heat, igniting other trash and often spreading beyond the container. Discarding cigarettes into planters or pots also commonly ignites mulch, dry leaves and other combustibles.



For More Information

www.ocfa.org

www.usfa.dhs.gov

www.nfpa.org

www.firesafety.gov

Smoking Fires in Orange County

- ✓ A smoking fire occurs at least once every 9 days in OCFA's jurisdiction.
- ✓ In the last 6 years there have been 257 smoking fires in Orange County homes resulting in 4 deaths and 25 injuries.
- ✓ Smoking fires cost OC homeowners \$1.6 million annually in property and content loss.



Nationwide, smoking is the leading cause of preventable home fire death.

Tips to Prevent Smoking Fires

The Orange County Fire Authority, the National Fire Protection Association and the U.S. Fire Administration recommend the following safety tips to help prevent smoking fires in the home:

- Never smoke when you're sleepy, have been drinking or have taken medication or other drugs.
- Never smoke in bed. Replace all mattresses made prior to the 2007 Federal Mattress Flammability Standard.
- Don't smoke in a home where oxygen is being used.
- Make sure matches are completely extinguished before throwing them away.
- Smoke outside using deep, sturdy ashtrays that are hard to tip over. Never place ashtrays on the arms of sofas or chairs.
- Never leave lit cigarettes, cigars or pipes unattended.
- Soak cigarette/cigar butts and ashes in water before throwing them away.
- NEVER toss hot butts or ashes in the trash, on the ground or in planters or pots where they can ignite other flammable materials.
- Store matches and lighters up high, out of children's sight and reach.

Smoke Alarms Save Lives!

One of the best ways to protect yourself and your family from a smoking fire is to have a working smoke alarm. Smoke alarms reduce your chance of dying in a home fire by 50%.

INSTALL smoke alarms in every sleeping area, in every hallway leading to sleeping areas and on every level of your home.

INSPECT smoke alarms regularly. Test alarms at least once a month and replace the batteries twice a year.

PROTECT your family by creating a home escape plan and practicing at least twice a year.

