

## Fire Safety at Home

- Statistics reveal that almost half of all home fires start in the kitchen. House fires are more common in winter months when people are using fires, heaters and other electrical equipment, although fires may occur at any time of the year.
- A double adaptor or a power board plugged into another double adaptor or power board creates a danger of overloading the electricity system.
- Leaving an extension cord coiled while in use or placing a cord under floor coverings can cause overheating.
- Only use one appliance per power point and switch off when not in use. If appliances heat up during use, switch off and leave on an inflammable surface to cool before storing it.
- Be careful to keep electrical appliances away from water.
- Computers, monitors and TVs can overheat and cause fires even when not in use. They should be turned off after each session. Good air circulation is necessary around TVs and videos. TVs should be turned off at the set, not only with the remote control.
- Light globes can become very hot. It is dangerous to cover a lamp with any type of fabric. To dim a lamp, it is recommended that a lower wattage globe is used.
- Remember heaters are a major cause of house fires.
  - Read and follow the operating instructions for your heater
  - All clothes and curtains should be at least one metre from the heater
  - Turn off all heaters before you leave your room or go to bed
  - Before you go to bed at night or leave your home, ensure heaters are turned off at their power source and fires, including candles, are extinguished.
- Most house fires start in the kitchen, so keep alert to fire danger when you are cooking
  - Prepare food only in the kitchen
  - Always stay in the kitchen while food is cooking
  - Hot oils and fats catch fire easily
    - DO NOT use water to put out an oil fire
    - Use a dry powder extinguisher, fire blanket or saucepan lid to extinguish, if safe to do so
    - Turn off all cooking appliances before you leave the room or go to bed.

- Smoke alarms are devices that detect smoke and then sound an alarm. They are required by Law to be fitted into all accommodation/housing.
- Smoke alarms alert and wake people, allowing valuable time to get out of a house during a fire. They should be fixed to the ceiling in or near bedrooms and living areas.
- Smoke alarms should be tested once a month by pushing the test button on the outside of the alarm to check that your smoke alarm is in working order. Try replacing the batteries if it does not work when you are testing it. Test the smoke alarm as soon as you have replaced the battery to ensure you have done it correctly.
- It is very important that you prepare and practice a fire escape plan, and that everyone in the household knows what to do in an emergency. Plan a way out of your accommodation and ensure everyone knows and understand this escape route. You will need to know an escape plan from every room.
- Always have a second escape plan in case the main route is blocked by the fire, for example, front or back doors. If possible, get down low to avoid smoke and fire and crawl to the nearest exit to escape.
- Select a meeting place outside the home (e.g. the front pavement or street). Make sure everyone in your household knows to meet there should a fire occur in your home.
- A deadlock is a lock that may be fitted to your doors. If you deadlock your door it can only be opened by inserting the appropriate house key and turning the lock to unlock it. NEVER go to bed with your doors deadlocked in the event of a fire you will not be able to exit the building.

## **Bushfire Safety**

- Each state and territory has a Fire Authority that restricts the use of fire in the open. You must obey all instructions to limit your use of fire, such as barbeques and camp fires. A total Fire Ban prohibits the lighting of any fires in the open air.
- Bush fires are common occurrences in Australia during our often long hot summers. If you are caught in the middle of a bush fire:
  - Park the car immediately and remain calm. Look for a clear area, preferably off the road
  - Do not leave the vehicle, your vehicle will protect you from radiant heat
  - Switch the ignition off, close all windows and vents or turn vents to recycle and turn your headlights on
  - Stay in the vehicle and get down as low as you can until the fire has passed, if you have water drink it.

- Never attempt to drive through smoke or flame. Crashes can occur when drivers run off the road, striking trees or other cars
- Once the fire front has passed, exit the vehicle and inspect it for damage before proceeding
- Do not proceed until you are satisfied that the fire has passed and that you are not likely to be trapped a second time
- Exit the area as quickly as possible. Remember fire vehicles may be trying to enter the area and your presence may hinder firefighting operations.