

Home Hazard & Safety Hunt Checklist

Do you believe that your home is a safe place to be?

Statistics show that most fires, accidents and injuries occur in the home.

An important step in family preparedness is the identification of hazards in and around your home. Once the hazards are identified, it doesn't take much time or effort to make your home a safer place to live.

Using the checklist below, involve the whole family, *especially your children*, in a home hazard hunt. Remember that anything that can move, break, fall, or burn is a potential hazard. After identifying what needs to be done, devise a plan to do it.

A General Hazard/Safety First Step

- ✓ Keep at least one fire extinguisher (A-B-C type). Maintain and recharge according to manufacturer's instructions. Show all family members where it's kept and how to use it.
- ✓ At least 1 person in our home with current first aid/CPR certification.
- ✓ Designate a family meeting place outside
- ✓ Ensure windows open easily enough for children to open unassisted, if need, for escape route
- ✓ Install at least one smoke detector on each level of the home, especially near the bedrooms. Test every month and change batteries at least once a year.
- ✓ Utilities: Locate the main electric fuse or circuit breaker box, water service shut-off, and natural gas main shut-off.
- ✓ Utilities: Contact local utility companies for instructions on how to turn the utilities off. Teach family members when and how to turn off utilities off.
- ✓ Utilities: Clear area around shut-off switches for easy access.
- ✓ Utilities Gas and water: Attach shut-off wrench or specialty tool to a pipe or other location close by the gas and water shut-off valves.
- ✓ Utilities Gas and water: Paint shut-off valves with white or fluorescent paint to increase visibility.
- ✓ A quick rule of thumb: "If it's taller than it is wide, secure it!"
- ✓ Identify poisons, toxins and solvents that are located in high or dangerous locations. Move them to lower areas behind a guardrail, or preferably, within a locked cabinet. Keep them away from your water and food storage areas and out of the reach of children and pets. If possible, store all flammable liquids in an outside building, away from structures and vehicles. (Spilled flammable liquids could easily cause a fire and destroy your home.)

Behaviors for Child Proof General Precautions

- ✓ Always watch young children while in the bathroom.
- ✓ Cook on back stove burners when possible and turn pot handles toward the back of the stove.
- ✓ Keep hot dishes away from the edges of tables and counters.
- ✓ Supervise your child whenever he or she is around water and maintain fences and gates that act as barriers to water.
- ✓ Teach your child safety by behaving safely in your own everyday activities.
- ✓ Teach your children to never approach strange dogs or wild animals.

Home Hazard & Safety Hunt Checklist - Continued

- ✓ Test the temperature of heated food before

feeding children.

Inside General Hazard / Safety

- ✓ Alarm: Are carbon monoxide detectors installed and in working order in all sleeping areas?
- ✓ Alarm: Are smoke alarms installed and in working order? Are batteries changed at least every six months?
- ✓ Are stairs and hallways well lit?
- ✓ Are stairways kept clear and uncluttered?
- ✓ Checked that all power tools are unplugged and stored in cases when not in use.
- ✓ Checked that gas appliances are properly vented.
- ✓ Checked that stair handrails are installed securely.
- ✓ Child Proof: Are all poisonous plants kept out of children's reach?
- ✓ Child Proof: Are all purses, handbags, briefcases and similar items, including those belonging to visitors, kept out of children's reach?
- ✓ Child Proof: Are curtain cords and shade pulls kept out of children's reach?
- ✓ Child Proof: Are guards installed around fireplaces, radiators, hot pipes and wood-burning stoves?
- ✓ Child Proof: Are safety gates installed at tops and bottoms of stairways?
- ✓ Child Proof: Are sharp edges of furniture cushioned with corner guards or other material?
- ✓ Child Proof: Do you have an emergency plan to use in case of fire? Does your family practice this plan?
- ✓ Child Proof: Is a list of instructions posted near telephones for use by children or babysitters?
- ✓ Child Proof: Separate draw cords on blinds and drapes to reduce strangulation hazards for kids
- ✓ Do you have too many electrical cords plugged into outlets that could cause a potential fire hazard?
- ✓ Ensure floor coverings (rugs, carpets) are properly secured to prevent tripping hazards
- ✓ Ensure room exits are unobstructed
- ✓ Fire Extinguisher: Are fire extinguishers installed where they are most likely to be needed?
- ✓ Fixed or moved torn carpets or wires in pathways that may cause people to trip.
- ✓ If you have a firearm, is it unloaded in a locked place, out of reach of children and stored separately from ammunition?
- ✓ Installed a non-slip backing on all throw rugs.
- ✓ Installed and checked light switch outlet covers so no wires are exposed.
- ✓ Is a list of emergency phone numbers posted near telephones? Is the Poison Control Center hotline number (800-222-1222) posted near all phones and programmed into your mobile phone?
- ✓ Is the hot water heater set at a safe temperature? (A setting of 120° F or less prevents scalding from tap water in sinks and in tubs. Let the water run for three minutes before testing it.)
- ✓ Protected all electrical devices with surge protectors.
- ✓ Pushed the test button on all Ground Fault Interrupt (GFI) outlets.
- ✓ Working nightlights at the top and bottom of each set of stairs.
- ✓ Anchor water heater, large appliances, bookcases, other tall or heavy furniture, shelves, mirrors, and pictures to wall studs.
- ✓ Fit water heater with a flexible gas supply line.
- ✓ Place large or heavy objects on lower shelves.
- ✓ Install clips, latches, or other locking devices on cabinet doors.
- ✓ Provide strong support and flexible connections on gas appliances.
- ✓ Brace overhead light fixtures.

Home Hazard & Safety Hunt Checklist - Continued

- ✓ Hang heavy items such as pictures and mirrors away from beds and places where people sit.

Bathroom Safety

- ✓ Ensure all outlets are GFI equipped
- ✓ Replace glass bottles with plastic containers
- ✓ Store poisonous cleaning supplies and medicines in "child-proofed" cabinets
- ✓ Are all medicines in child-resistant containers and stored in a locked medicine cabinet?
- ✓ Are cabinets equipped with safety latches and kept closed?
- ✓ Are hair dryers and other appliances stored away from the sink, tub or toilet?
- ✓ Are razors, razor blades and other sharp objects kept out of children's reach?
- ✓ Are shampoos and cosmetics stored out of children's reach?
- ✓ Are the toilet seat and lid kept down when the toilet is not in use?
- ✓ Does the bottom of the tub or shower have non-slip surfacing?

Bedroom Safety Adult's Parents' Room

- ✓ Are cosmetics, perfumes and breakable items stored out of children's reach?
- ✓ Are small objects, such as jewelry, buttons and safety pins, kept out of children's reach?
- ✓ Are space heaters kept away from curtains and flammable materials?

Bedroom Safety Child's Room

- ✓ Are crib slats no more than 2-3 inches apart?
- ✓ Are electric cords kept out of children's reach?
- ✓ Are toys in good repair and appropriate for children's age
- ✓ Does the mattress fit the sides of the crib snugly?
- ✓ Does the toy box have a secure lid and safe-closing hinges?
- ✓ Is children's clothing, especially sleepwear, flame resistant?
- ✓ Is the bed or crib placed away from radiators and other hot surfaces?

Kitchen Hazards - Safety

- ✓ Child Proof: Are cabinets equipped with safety latches?
- ✓ Child Proof: Are foods and small items that can choke a child kept out of reach?
- ✓ Child Proof: Are knives and other sharp items kept out of children's reach?
- ✓ Child Proof: Are matches and lighters, all appliance cords and cleaning products kept out of children's reach?
- ✓ Child Proof: Is the highchair placed away from the stove and other hot appliances?
- ✓ Do not leave cooking food unattended
- ✓ Keep a pan lid nearby in case of fire
- ✓ Keep cooking areas clean and clear of combustibles
- ✓ Keep cords from dangling Ensure outlets near the kitchen sink are GFI (Ground Fault Interrupt) equipped

Home Hazard & Safety Hunt Checklist - Continued

- ✓ Keep pan handles turned in while cooking
- ✓ Keep sharp knives out of reach of children

Smoking and Matches Safety

- ✓ Check furniture for smoldering cigarettes every night, especially after parties
- ✓ Dispose of ashes and cigarette butts in a metal can at least daily
- ✓ Never smoke when drowsy or in bed
- ✓ Store matches and lighters out of reach of children
- ✓ Use large, deep, non-tip ashtrays

Clothes Washer and Dryer Safety

- ✓ Check vent hose and vent line to ensure they are clean and provide unobstructed airflow
- ✓ Ensure lint filter is clean and serviceable
- ✓ Verify that appliances are properly grounded

Heating Equipment Safety

- ✓ Are portable space heaters always turned off when adults leave the room or go to sleep?
- ✓ Are propane tanks and other fuels stored outside your home?
- ✓ Clean and inspect chimney annually
- ✓ Dispose of ashes in metal container
- ✓ Do you know the fire department's emergency phone number (which should be called from a neighbor's or nearby phone once you get outside)?
- ✓ Does your fireplace have a sturdy screen to catch sparks?
- ✓ Elevate new or replacement gas water heaters at least 18" above the floor
- ✓ Ensure fireplace inserts and gas/wood stoves comply with local codes
- ✓ Has your furnace been serviced by a professional in the past year?
- ✓ If space heaters are used in your home, are they at least three feet (one metre) away from anything else that can burn, including people, furniture, and pets?
- ✓ Keep clothes, furnishings, and electrical cords at least 12" from wall heaters and 36" from portable heaters
- ✓ Set water heater thermostat at 120 F

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Home Hazard & Safety Hunt Checklist - Continued

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Garage/Attic/Shed Safety

- ✓ Keep flammable liquids such as paints and thinners in their original containers and store on or near the ground and away from sources of heat, sparks, or flame
- ✓ Never store combustibles such as newspapers and magazines in your attic
- ✓ Store used oily rags in sealed metal containers
- ✓ Use gasoline as a motor fuel only and never use or store it inside the home Keep only a small quantity of gasoline, if necessary, in an approved container locked in the garage or shed

Fire Hazards – Safety

- ✓ Alarm: Are the batteries working in all your smoke alarms? (A grown-up should help by pushing the test button to find out.)
- ✓ Alarm: Battery replaced every year?
- ✓ Alarm: Does your home have smoke alarms on every level, including the basement, and outside each sleeping area?
- ✓ Alarm: Installed properly on every level?
- ✓ Alarm: Tested 1st Tuesday of each month?
- ✓ Alarms: Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in each living area that are tested monthly.
- ✓ Check extension cords and replaced those that are damaged.
- ✓ Clean and repair chimneys, flue pipes, vent connectors, dryer ducts and gas vents at least once a year.
- ✓ Cleaned debris off the roof, out of the gutters and away from air conditioning units.
- ✓ Cleaned or replaced the furnace filter regularly.
- ✓ Cleaned the cooking grease off the kitchen exhaust hood and filter.
- ✓ Clear out old rags, papers, mattresses, broken furniture and other combustible materials.
- ✓ Cleared 30 feet of space around our home to reduce damage from wildfires.
- ✓ Cooking/Kitchen: Are curtains and other things that can burn well away from the stove?
- ✓ Cooking/Kitchen: Are pot handles turned inward so they can't be bumped?
- ✓ Cooking/Kitchen: Are stove tops and counters clean and uncluttered?
- ✓ Cooking/Kitchen: Are there pot holders within easy reach of the stove?
- ✓ Cooking/Kitchen: Does a grown-up always stay in the kitchen when food is cooking on the stove?
- ✓ Cooking/Kitchen: Is there a "kid-free" zone of three feet (one metre) around the stove when grown-ups are cooking?
- ✓ Fire Escape: Are all the exits in your home clear of furniture, toys, and clutter?
- ✓ Fire Escape: Does your family have a home fire escape plan that includes two exits, usually a door and a window, from each room?
- ✓ Fire Escape: Has your family picked a safe place to meet outside after you exit your home?
- ✓ Fire extinguisher: Are additional fire extinguishers kept in the kitchen, garage, basement, and sleeping area?
- ✓ Fire Extinguisher: Verify that an all purpose fire extinguisher (Class ABC) is maintained in an accessible location Ensure that all occupants know how to use it
- ✓ Fire extinguishers that are properly mounted and inspected.
- ✓ Have you and your family practiced a home fire drill within the last six months? (Why not do one tonight?)

- ✓ Inspected and cleaned the covers of our smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms.
- ✓ Installed screening underneath elevated decks to prevent debris buildup.
- ✓ Keep heaters, candles and other heat sources away from curtains and furniture.
- ✓ Move clothes, curtains, rags, and paper goods away from electrical equipment, gas appliances or flammable materials.
- ✓ Move combustible materials away from electrical equipment, gas appliances or flammable materials.
- ✓ Place portable heaters on a level surface, away from high traffic areas. (Purchase portable

Home Hazard & Safety Hunt Checklist - Continued

- heaters that are equipped with automatic shut-off switches and avoid the use of extension cords.)
- ✓ Remove dried grass cuttings, tree trimmings and weeds from the property.
- ✓ Stored firewood at least 30 feet away from our home.
- ✓ Stored flammable materials (such as paints, gasoline and barbecue grill tanks) properly and away from heat sources.
- ✓ Stored matches, lighters, and chemicals out of children's reach.

Chemical Hazards

- ✓ If flammable materials must be stored in the home, use storage items that have a label indicating that they have been inspected by a testing laboratory such as Underwriter's Laboratories (UL) or Factory Mutual (FM). Move materials away from heat sources, open flames, gas appliances, and children.
- ✓ Instruct family members not to use gasoline, benzene, or other flammable fluids for starting fires or cleaning indoors.
- ✓ Keep combustible liquids such as paint thinner, kerosene, charcoal lighter fluid, and turpentine away from heat sources.
- ✓ Store flammable liquids such as gasoline, acetone, benzene, and lacquer thinner in approved safety cans, away from the home. Place containers in a well-ventilated area and close the lids tightly. Secure the containers to prevent spills.
- ✓ Store oily waste and polishing rags in covered metal cans.
- ✓ Follow labeling information for proper use and disposal of household chemicals.
- ✓ Move materials away from heat sources, open flames, gas appliances and children.
- ✓ Store oily waste and polishing rags in covered metal cans.

Electrical Safety

- ✓ Are electrical cords in good condition, without cracks or frayed areas? (A grown-up should unplug lamps and appliances before inspecting the cords.)
- ✓ Are extension cords used safely? (Are they not under carpets or across doorways?)
- ✓ Are kitchen appliances – such as the coffee-maker, toaster oven, and microwave – plugged into separate receptacle outlets?
- ✓ Avoid the use of extension cords (If used, ensure the correct wattage rating)
- ✓ Check electric outlets, extension cords and power strips to make sure they are not overloaded.
- ✓ Check fuses/circuit breakers for the correct amperage ratings
- ✓ Check that the proper wattage light bulbs are being used in light fixtures and lamps.
- ✓ Cover any exposed outlets and wiring.

- ✓ Do not override or bypass fuses or circuit breakers
- ✓ Ensure cords are not placed under rug. Remove electrical cords that run under rugs or carpet or near heat sources.
- ✓ Make sure there is only one plug per outlet. Avoid using cube-taps or overloading outlets.
- ✓ Plug only one heat producing device into an electrical outlet

Home Hazard & Safety Hunt Checklist - Continued

- ✓ Repair or replace appliances that overheat, short out, smoke or spark.
- ✓ Repair or replace extension cords and appliance cords that are frayed, cracked or worn.
- ✓ Replace damaged cords, plugs, sockets
- ✓ Use bulbs with the correct wattage for lamps and fixtures
- ✓ Verify circuits are not overloaded

Electrical Problem Clues (some)

- ✓ Flickering lights. If the lights dim every time you turn on an appliance that circuit is overloaded or has a loose connection.
- ✓ Sparks. If sparks appear when you insert or remove a plug, they could be a sign of loose connections.
- ✓ Warm electrical cord. If an electrical cord is warm to the touch, the cord is underrated or defective.
- ✓ Frequent blown fuses or broken circuits. A fuse or circuit breaker that keeps tripping is an important warning sign of problems.
- ✓ Frequent bulb burnout. A light bulb that burns out frequently is a sign that the bulb is too high a wattage for the fixture.

Outside Hazards - Safety

- ✓ A driveway that is accessible to emergency workers (adequate clearance on the sides, overhead and no tight turns).
- ✓ Are walkways and stairs free of toys, tools and other objects?
- ✓ Are walkways, stairs and railings in good repair?
- ✓ Braced window air conditioning units against falling.
- ✓ Check with the fire department before burning debris or using a burn barrel
- ✓ Checked the driveway and patio for any cracks or uneven surfaces that could cause falls.
- ✓ Child Proof: Are children kept away from all poisonous plants?
- ✓ Child Proof: Are nearby swimming pools enclosed with a fence that children cannot easily climb over?
- ✓ Child Proof: Are sandboxes and wading pools covered when not in use?
- ✓ Child Proof: Is playground equipment safe? Is it assembled according to the manufacturer's instructions?
- ✓ Child Proof: Is the backyard pool separated from the home's entrance by a fence?
- ✓ Clear dry vegetation and rubbish from around the house
- ✓ Dispose of barbecue briquettes in a metal container
- ✓ Identified the main gas valves to our home and learned how and when to turn them off.
- ✓ Is trash kept in tightly covered containers?
- ✓ Made our house number visible from the street.
- ✓ Maintain a "fire retardant greenbelt" around rural buildings
- ✓ Manufactured Homes: Inspected and tightened the tie-down straps in the last year.
- ✓ Protected our water pipes from freezing in the winter.

Home Hazard & Safety Hunt Checklist - Continued

- ✓ Use barbecue grills away from buildings and

vegetation

Extreme Heat Hazard & Safety

- ✓ Make sure your home is properly insulated. This will help to conserve electricity and reduce your home's power demands for air conditioning.
- ✓ During a drought, conserve water by placing a brick, or another large solid object, in your

toilet tank to reduce the amount of water used in flushing.

- ✓ If you are a farmer, consider developing alternative water sources.

Flooding Hazard & Safety

- ✓ Checked the caulking around bathroom fixtures to prevent water from seeping into the sub-flooring and wall, and causing damage.
- ✓ Checked the water heater for signs of leaks or rust that may indicate the need for replacement.
- ✓ Checked water hoses on clothes washers, refrigerator icemakers and dishwashers for cracks, leaks or other signs of stress. These hoses should be replaced every 5 years.
- ✓ Elevated the water heater to prevent water damage.

- ✓ Installed a sewer back-flow valve to prevent water from coming back in the pipe.
- ✓ Shut-off valves for all plumbing fixtures to cut off the water in the event of a leak.
- ✓ Avoid building in a flood plain unless you elevate and reinforce your home.
- ✓ Construct barriers such as levees, bems and floodwalls to stop floodwater from entering the building.
- ✓ Seal walls in basement with waterproofing compounds to avoid seepage through cracks in the walls.

High Winds Hazard & Safety

- ✓ Braced the chimney on the outside to prevent falling bricks and reinforced the ceiling to prevent bricks from falling through.
- ✓ Installed hurricane or high wind shutters or have pre-cut plywood panels for all windows and sliding glass doors.
- ✓ Removed dead and broken limbs from trees to prevent them from falling or becoming wind-borne missiles during a storm.

- ✓ Replaced roofing tiles that were broken or missing.
- ✓ Stored lawn furniture, toys, gardening tools and trash cans away from stairs and exits, and secured these items to prevent them from being blown by high winds and doing damage.
- ✓ Strengthened the garage door to prevent damage from high winds.

Landslides and Mudflows Hazard & Safety

- ✓ Consult a professional geotechnical expert for opinions and advice on landslide problems and on corrective measures you can take.

- ✓ Plant ground cover on slopes and build retaining walls.
- ✓ In mudflow areas, build channels or deflection walls to direct the flow around buildings.

Home Hazard & Safety Hunt Checklist - Continued

- ✓ Install flexible pipe fittings to avoid gas or water

leaks.

Thunderstorms and Lightning Hazard & Safety

- ✓ Install lightning rods. Lightning rods will carry the electrical charge of lightning bolts safely to the ground, greatly reducing the chance of a lightning-induced fire.

- ✓ Insure crops against financial loss from storm damage.
- ✓ Trim back dead or weak branches from trees.

Tornadoes Hazard & Safety

- ✓ Tornadoes can create wind and rain-driven impact similar to that of hurricanes. So, many of the effects of hurricanes such as installing shutters and strengthening masonry can also minimize the effects of tornadoes.

- ✓ Check local building codes and ordinances for safety requirements, such as the use of wind-resistant designs.

Wildland Fires Hazard & Safety

- ✓ Obtain local building codes and weed abatement by-laws for structures built near wooded areas.
- ✓ Use fire-resistant materials when building, renovating or retro-fitting structures.
- ✓ Create a safety zone of "fire break" to separate the home from combustible plants and vegetation. Stone walls can act as heat shields and deflect flames.
- ✓ Install a spark arrestor on your chimney and keep your chimney clean.
- ✓ Clean roof surfaces and gutter regularly.
- ✓ Thin trees and brush properly within the defensible space.
- ✓ Remove trash and debris from the defensible space.
- ✓ Remove any trees growing through the porch.
- ✓ Clear roof and gutters of leaves and debris.
- ✓ Remove branches overhanging chimney and roof.

- ✓ Stack firewood uphill or on a contour away from the home.
- ✓ Use noncombustible roof materials.
- ✓ Place shutters, fire curtains or heavy drapes on windows.
- ✓ Place screens on foundation and eave vents.
- ✓ Enclose sides of stilt foundations and decks.
- ✓ Use a chimney screen or spark arrester.
- ✓ Clear vegetation around fire hydrants, cisterns, propane tanks, etc.
- ✓ Make sure an outdoor water supply is available, with hose, nozzle and pump.
- ✓ Make sure fire tools, ladder and fire extinguishers are available.
- ✓ Post address signs that are clearly visible from the street or road.
- ✓ Make sure the driveway is wide enough for fire trucks and equipment.
- ✓ Post load limits on bridges.
- ✓ Install and test smoke detectors.
- ✓ Practice a family fire drill and evacuation plan.

Wildland Fires Hazard & Safety - Defending Your Home

Home Hazard & Safety Hunt Checklist - Continued

Whether you choose to stay to defend your home or to evacuate, complete as many of the following preparations as possible.

- ✓ Do not jeopardize your life. No material item is worth a life.
- ✓ Wear fire-resistant clothing and protective gear.
- ✓ Remove combustible materials from around structures.
- ✓ Close or cover outside vents and shutters.
- ✓ Position garden hoses so they reach the entire house. Have the hoses charged, with an adjustable nozzle, but turned off.
- ✓ Place large, full water containers around the house. Soak burlap sacks, small rugs or large rags in the containers.
- ✓ Place a ladder against the roof of the house on the opposite side of the approaching wildfire. Place a garden hose near the ladder, prepared as described previously.
- ✓ Place portable pumps near available water supplies, such as pools, hot tubs, creeks, etc.
- ✓ Close all windows and doors. Do not lock them.
- ✓ Close all inside doors.
- ✓ Turn on a light in each room and all outside lights.
- ✓ Leave them on even during daylight hours.
- ✓ Fill tubs, sinks and any other containers with water.
- ✓ Shut off the gas at the outside meter of the propane tank.
- ✓ Remove lace, nylon or any other drapes and curtains made from light material. Close Venetian blinds, heavy drapes or fire-resistant window coverings.
- ✓ Move overstuffed furniture into the center of the house, away from windows and sliding glass doors.
- ✓ Park your car in the garage, facing out. Close the windows but do not lock the doors. Leave the keys in the ignition.
- ✓ Close the garage door but leave it unlocked.
- ✓ Disconnect the automatic garage door opener.

Winter Storms Hazard & Safety

- ✓ Purchase flood insurance to cover possible flood damage that may occur during the spring thaw.
- ✓ Install storm windows or cover windows with plastic from the inside

Hurricanes Hazard & Safety

- ✓ Install permanent shutters on your windows.
- ✓ Install protection to the outside areas of sliding glass doors.
- ✓ Elevate coastal homes.
- ✓ Strengthen garage doors.
- ✓ Strengthen unreinforced masonry.
- ✓ Trim back dead or weak branches from trees.

Earthquake Hazard & Safety

- ✓ Are beds or chairs a safe distance from big windows?
- ✓ Are bookshelves fastened securely to the wall?
- ✓ Are cabinets or cupboards fastened to the wall?
- ✓ Are the doors locked shut?

- ✓ Are entertainment cabinets bolted to the wall and electronic equipment secure on the shelves and behind cabinet doors?
- ✓ Are mirrors or pictures hung away from beds and chairs?
- ✓ Are there no heavy objects on shelves above beds or chairs?
- ✓ Bolt heavy, tall, upright furniture to wall studs
- ✓ Bolt home to foundation to prevent shifting during an earthquake
- ✓ Check chimney for loose bricks and repair as needed
- ✓ Check foundation for cracks and repair as needed
- ✓ Checked to see that our home is bolted to its foundation.
- ✓ Installed and checked flexible connectors from water and gas lines to appliances, since rigid connections often break during an earthquake.
- ✓ Installed or replaced latches on kitchen, bathroom and workroom cabinet doors so that they cannot accidentally open if the house shakes.
- ✓ Is the water heater secured to studs?
- ✓ Locate beds away from windows and heavy wallmounted objects
- ✓ Lock or remove rollers on beds, furniture and appliances

Home Hazard & Safety Hunt Checklist - Continued

- ✓ Moved heavy or breakable objects from high shelves to lower shelves and secured them.
- ✓ Secure hanging plants and light fixtures with one or more guy wires to prevent swinging into walls or windows and breaking
- ✓ Secure items on shelves with quake mats, Velcro™, low shelf barrier, etc.
- ✓ Secure kitchen and bathroom cabinets with “positive” (self-closing) latches
- ✓ Secure mirrors and pictures to the wall or hang them with heavy wire, looped through eye screws or tongue-in-groove hangers
- ✓ Secured all electronic equipment and appliances so that they cannot slide off countertops and furniture.
- ✓ Secured top-heavy and freestanding furniture to wall studs to keep it from toppling over in a disaster, injuring people and/or blocking exits.
- ✓ Securely anchored mirrors, pictures and hanging plants to wall studs away from windows using closed hooks.
- ✓ Store heavy and/or breakable items on lower shelves
- ✓ Strap water heater to wall studs
- ✓ Strapped the water heater to wall studs to prevent it from moving or tipping.
- ✓ Use flexible connections on gas appliances

Tsunamis Hazard & Safety

- ✓ Avoid building or living in buildings within several hundred feet of the coastline.
- ✓ If you must live in a coastal building, ask your insurance agent about the flood insurance.

- ✓ Elevate coast homes. Review the mitigation activities under the section titled "hurricanes."

Generator Hazard & Safety

- ✓ Follow the manufacturer’s instructions and guidelines when using generators.
- ✓ Use a generator or other fuel-powered machines outside the home. CO fumes are

- odorless and can quickly overwhelm you indoors.
- ✓ Use the appropriate sized and type power cords to carry the electric load. Overloaded cords can overheat and cause fires.

Home Hazard & Safety Hunt Checklist - Continued

- ✓ Never run cords under rugs or carpets where heat might build up or damage to a cord may go unnoticed.
- ✓ Never connect generators to another power source such as power lines. The reverse flow of electricity or “backfeed” can electrocute an unsuspecting utility worker.

Kerosene Heaters Hazard & Safety

- ✓ Be sure your heater is in good working condition. Inspect exhaust parts for carbon buildup. Be sure the heater has an emergency shut off in case the heater is tipped over.
- ✓ Never use fuel burning appliances without proper room venting. Burning fuel (coal, kerosene, or propane, for example) can produce deadly fumes.
- ✓ Use ONLY the fuel recommended by the heater manufacturer. NEVER introduce a fuel into a unit not designed for that type fuel.
- ✓ Keep kerosene, or other flammable liquids stored in approved metal containers, in well ventilated storage areas, outside of the house.
- ✓ NEVER fill the heater while it is operating or hot. When refueling an oil or kerosene unit, avoid overfilling. DO NOT use cold fuel for it may expand in the tank as it warms up.
- ✓ Refueling should be done outside of the home (or outdoors). Keep young children away from space heaters--especially when they are wearing night gowns or other loose clothing that can be easily ignited.
- ✓ When using a fuel burning appliance in the bedroom, be sure there is proper ventilation to prevent a buildup of carbon monoxide.

Wood Stoves and Fireplaces Hazard & Safety

Wood stoves and fireplaces are becoming a very common heat source in homes. Careful attention to safety can minimize their fire hazard.

- ✓ Be sure the fireplace or stove is installed properly. Wood stoves should have adequate clearance (36”) from combustible surfaces and proper floor support and protection.
- ✓ Wood stoves should be of good quality, solid construction and design, and should be evaluated by a nationally recognized laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL).
- ✓ Have the chimney inspected annually and cleaned if necessary, especially if it has not been used for some time.
- ✓ Do not use flammable liquids to start or accelerate any fire.
- ✓ Keep a glass or metal screen in front of the fireplace opening, to prevent embers or sparks from jumping out, unwanted material from going in, and help prevent the possibility of burns to occupants.
- ✓ The stove should be burned hot twice a day for 15-30 minutes to reduce the amount of creosote buildup.
- ✓ Don't use excessive amounts of paper to build roaring fires in fireplaces. It is possible to ignite creosote in the chimney by overbuilding the fire.
- ✓ Never burn charcoal indoors. Burning charcoal can give off lethal amounts of carbon monoxide.
- ✓ Keep flammable materials away from your fireplace mantel. A spark from the fireplace could easily ignite these materials.
- ✓ Before you go to sleep, be sure your fireplace fire is out. NEVER close your damper with hot

Home Hazard & Safety Hunt Checklist - Continued

ashes in the fireplace. A closed damper will help the fire to heat up again and will force toxic carbon monoxide into the house.

- ✓ If synthetic logs are used, follow the directions on the package. NEVER break a synthetic log

apart to quicken the fire or use more than one log at a time. They often burn unevenly, releasing higher levels of carbon monoxide.

Highrise Fire Safety

- ✓ Never lock fire exits or doorways, halls or stairways. Fire doors provide a way out during the fire and slow the spread of fire and smoke. Never prop stairway or other fire doors open.
- ✓ Learn your building evacuation plan. Make sure everyone knows what to do if the fire alarm sounds. Plan and practice your escape plan together.
- ✓ Be sure your building manager posts evacuation plans in high traffic areas, such as lobbies.
- ✓ Learn the sound of your building's fire alarm and post emergency numbers near all telephones.
- ✓ Know who is responsible for maintaining the fire safety systems. Make sure nothing blocks these devices and promptly report any sign of damage or malfunction to the building management.
- ✓ DO NOT PANIC IN THE EVENT OF A Highrise FIRE EMERGENCY
- ✓ Do not assume anyone else has already called the fire department.
- ✓ Immediately call your local emergency number. Early notification of the fire department is important. The dispatcher will ask questions regarding the emergency. Stay calm and give the dispatcher the information they request.
- ✓ MAINTAIN AND INSTALL WORKING SMOKE ALARMS No matter where you live, always install smoke alarms on every level of your home. Test them monthly and change the batteries at least once a year.
- ✓ MAINTAIN multipurpose Fire Extinguishers in your apartment and keep them fully charged.

Manufactured Home Safety

- ✓ Have a minimum of two smoke alarms installed in your home regardless of sleeping space arrangements.
- ✓ Install smoke alarms in accordance with smoke alarm manufacturer guidelines. Test your smoke alarms once a month and replace the batteries at least once a year.
- ✓ Maintain your home heating system by having it serviced at least once a year by a professional.
- ✓ Do not store combustibles or flammables near heat sources.
- ✓ Never overload outlets, extension cords or electrical circuits. If the circuit breaker trips or fuses blow, immediately call a licensed electrician to check your system.
- ✓ Have an escape plan and practice escape routes with your family.
- ✓ Space heaters need their space. Do not place portable space heaters close to drapes, clothing or other combustible materials.
- ✓ Install skirting material to keep leaves and other debris and combustible items from blowing under your manufactured home.
- ✓ When considering a new home, ask if residential sprinklers are available as an option.
- ✓ If there is a fire - get out immediately, go to a neighbor's and notify the fire department using

the 911 system or the proper local emergency

number in your area.

Manufactured Home Safety Electrical

- ✓ Light bulbs, especially the newer halogen types, get very hot and can ignite combustible materials that get too close.
- ✓ Clothing or towels should never be placed atop a lampshade and table lamps should not fall over onto a bed or sofa.
- ✓ Most light fixtures are labeled to show the brightest bulb that can be safely used in that fixture; too high a wattage bulb can cause the fixture to overheat and start a fire.
- ✓ Extension cords are a common cause of electrical fires. You must be careful to use only

extension cords that are rated for the power used by the device they are powering. Extension cords should never be used as a long term solution to the need for another receptacle. Extension cords must never be run inside walls or under rugs or furniture. Extension cords can get warm in use and must be able to dissipate this heat or they can start a fire.

- ✓ The insulation on electrical cords can become damaged by wear, flexing, or age. Do not use any cord that is stiff or cracked.

101 Hazard Safety Checks that take a minute or less each:

1. Test each smoke alarm in your home
2. Replace the batteries in each smoke alarm
3. Count how many smoke alarms you have in your house. If you do not have one on every level and near sleeping areas, purchase additional smoke alarms
4. Designate an outside meeting place for your family (for example: the mailbox) in case of a fire or emergency
5. Blow out candles before leaving the room or going to sleep
6. Use a sturdy candle holder or hurricane lamp
7. Turn down your hot water heater to 120 degrees or less to prevent burns
8. Roll up your sleeves before you start cooking
9. Have oven mitts nearby when cooking
10. Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove
11. Store all matches and lighters out of reach of children
12. Put hot food and drinks near the center of the table only
13. Put down your hot drink when carrying your baby
14. Test hot water with an elbow before allowing a child to touch
15. Post your fire escape plan on your refrigerator
16. Put water on cigarette butts before throwing them away
17. Unplug small appliances such as hair dryers and toasters after using them
18. Use flameless candles
19. Move anything that can burn, such as dish towels, at least three feet away from the stove
20. Practice "Stop, Drop and Roll" with your kids
21. Schedule an appointment to have your furnace cleaned and inspected
22. Look for the UL Mark when you buy appliances
23. Tell kids to stay away from the stove/oven
24. Turn space heaters off before going to bed
25. Remove any gasoline from your home
26. Put non-slip strips in your tub and shower
27. Install night lights in the hallway
28. Put a flashlight in each bedroom
29. Wipe up spills as soon as they happen to prevent slips and falls
30. Use a sturdy Christmas tree stand
31. Water your Christmas tree every day

Home Hazard & Safety Hunt Checklist - Continued

32. Keep your Christmas tree at least three feet away from any heat source
33. Inspect your Christmas lights for signs of damage
34. Flip over large buckets so water cannot accumulate and become a drowning danger
35. Store cleaners and other poisons away from food
36. Post the Poison Control hotline number (1-800-222-1222) next to your phone
37. If you have young children, use cabinet locks on cabinets that have poisons such as antifreeze, cleaners, detergents, etc.
38. Keep medicine in its original containers
39. Purchase a carbon monoxide detector for your home
40. Test your carbon monoxide (CO) alarm
41. Put your infant to sleep on his/her back
42. Remove any soft bedding, stuffed animals and pillows from your infant's crib
43. Cut your toddler's food into small bites
44. Use safety straps on high chairs and changing tables
45. Check www.recalls.gov to see if any items in your home (including cribs) have been recalled
46. Move cribs away from windows
47. Use safety covers on unused electrical outlets
48. Test small toys for choking hazards – if it fits in a toilet paper roll, it's too small
49. Remove all plastic bags from the nursery
50. Pick up any small items, such as coins or buttons, that can be choking hazards for infants and toddlers
51. Write down emergency contact information for your family and make sure everyone has these numbers
52. If young children live in or visit your home, move furniture away from windows so they don't climb up to look out and accidentally fall
53. Tie window cords out of a child's reach
54. Check your child's bath water temperature (use your wrist or elbow) to make sure it is not too hot
55. Remove drawstrings from your baby's clothing
56. Keep the toilet lid shut to prevent little fingers from getting slammed by a falling lid
57. If you have toddlers, install a toilet seat lock
58. If you have young children, install door knob covers on bathroom doors
59. Use a fireplace screen
60. Put toys away after playing
61. Don't refer to medicine or vitamins as "candy"
62. Put on safety glasses before any DIY project
63. Put tools away after your DIY project is complete
64. Post emergency numbers near your phone
65. Pick up one new thing for your family's emergency preparedness kit
66. Use a ladder, not a chair, when climbing to reach something
67. Use plastic instead of glass near the pool
68. Cover any spa or hot tub when it is not in use
69. Purchase a first aid kit
70. Drain the bath tub immediately after bathing
71. Remove clutter from the stairs
72. Use the handrail when you are walking up or down the stairs
73. If the power goes out, use flashlights instead of candles
74. Ask smokers to smoke outside
75. Wear proper shoes when climbing a ladder
76. Check your home for too many plugs in one socket and fix the problem
77. Install baby gates at the top and bottom of stairs if you have young children
78. Never leave food cooking unattended
79. Make sure pools or spas are properly fenced to keep out small children
80. Teach kids to tell you when they see matches or lighters
81. Turn out the lights when you leave the room
82. Unplug appliances that aren't in use (especially in the kitchen)
83. Take your hair dryer off of the bathroom counter and store it safely
84. Check your electronics for the UL Mark

85. Identify two exits from every room with your kids in case of fire
86. Check your holiday decorations – keep breakable decorations out of reach of young children
87. Replace an old light bulb with a new energy-efficient option
88. Check the walls for loose paint chips and re-paint with low-VOC or VOC-free paint
89. Check all the outlets in your home for overloaded sockets or extension cords
90. Remove any extension cords that are pulled under rugs or tacked up
91. Place fire extinguishers in key areas of your home

Home Hazard & Safety Hunt Checklist - Continued

92. Place an escape ladder in an upstairs room that might not have an easy exit
93. Remove any painted furniture that is pre-1978 to avoid possible lead exposure
94. Lock medications safely in a cabinet
95. Consider low-flow toilets
96. Check that all major appliances are grounded and test your GFCIs
97. Clean the lint trap and hose on your dryer
98. Check your swing set for sharp edges or dangerous S-hooks
99. Take a tour of your home from your child's perspective looking for hazards
100. Hold a family fire drill
101. If it's taller than it is wide, secure it

Preparedness Family

- ✓ A family disaster plan that is practiced and updated approximately every 6 months. Families do best in a disaster by preparing in advance and working together as a team. Knowing what to do is everyone's responsibility. Discuss the disasters that are possible in your area and plan together what you will each do. Know how to contact each other and where to meet if anything happens.
- ✓ A disaster supplies kit that is refreshed every 6 months. Build a Disaster Supplies Kit – After a disaster, local officials and relief workers will be on the scene, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. Prepare your family to be on your own for at least 3 days with enough water and food for each family member, first aid kits, flashlights, fresh batteries, medicines and more. Don't forget to plan for your pets. If you've gathered supplies in advance, your family can easily evacuate or stay home safely and comfortably until help arrives.
- ✓ Develop an escape plan and practice it regularly
- ✓ Practice drills are a great way to help your family plan and remember what to do in case of a disaster or emergency
- ✓ Store important papers and valuables in a fire proof safe or cabinet
- ✓ A current home inventory with a copy stored at a separate location, such as an office, safe deposit box or relative's home.
- ✓ Maintain proper insurance coverage for your home and its contents (earthquake, flood, renter's, fire). Reviewed insurance policies each year.
- ✓ Have an out-of-state contact for family check after a disaster/emergency
- ✓ A battery-operated, NOAA weather/all-hazards radio.
- ✓ Contact your local authority to find out if there is a Neighborhood Emergency Program and or Watch Program to assist residents in preparing for a disaster.
- ✓ Check with local authorities to find out what hazards could occur in your area and the impact they could have.
- ✓ Develop a Family Emergency Plan that addresses these issues and suits your family's individual needs and limitations.
- ✓ Sketch the floor plan of your home showing the two main exit routes and an alternate second exit from each room if possible.

Home Hazard & Safety Hunt Checklist - Continued

- ✓ Keep your Family Emergency Plan in a visible place, such as the front of your refrigerator. Share your plan with your neighbours. Be sure to go through the steps with anyone who stays in your home.
- ✓ Mark on your plan the date it was prepared and update any changes in your household when they occur.
- ✓ Assign specific safety tasks to family members (e.g. one person responsible for gathering pets, one person responsible for first aid, etc.).
- ✓ Practice your Family Emergency Plan until everyone is sure of their role and keep it current by practicing every six months. Rehearsing can be fun, quality time with your family.
- ✓ Prepare an Emergency Supply Kit to keep your family self sufficient for a minimum of 72 hours. Be sure to include any special needs items you may require.
- ✓ Have Emergency Supply Kits in your vehicles and at your workplace.
- ✓ Mark the areas where any special medical equipment, the Emergency Supply Kit and the fire extinguishers are kept.
- ✓ Your family may not be together at home when an emergency occurs. So plan a family meeting place that's central to most of your regular away-from-home spots.
- ✓ In some emergency situations, local phone service may be limited. Plan to have an out-of-area telephone contact where all family members can check in, in case you are separated.
- ✓ Check your insurance policies to ensure you have all the coverage you need for fires, earthquakes, flooding, etc.
- ✓ Knowing how to use a ham radio can be a valuable asset in a crisis. Consider taking a course, especially if you live in an isolated area.
- ✓ Take first aid classes and keep your training current.
- ✓ Keep your vehicle in good repair and keep your gas tank at least half full.
- ✓ Stay in touch with the world around you. This will keep you informed of any impending dangers to your community, such as a possible flood. When warnings occur, do a quick run through of the Family Emergency Plan and stay tuned to the radio or TV.
- ✓ Go through your home with the Home Hazard Hunt checklist and take measures that make your home safer.