

Develop a Fire Safety & Evacuation Plan.

Make sure everyone knows what to do in the event of a fire. If there is a fire, get out first and then call for help once you are outside. Choose a meeting place and be sure no one ever goes back inside. If you think someone is inside, tell the firefighters.

Do Not Allow Smoking.

Encourage smokers to go outside. If you do allow smoking, provide smokers with large, deep ashtrays. When cleaning ashtrays, fill them with water, soak the cigarettes and then empty them in the trash.

Be Cautious With Electrical Outlets, Extension Cords, Appliances & Space Heaters.

Never overload electrical outlets or extension cords. Whenever possible, unplug extension cords when not in use. Space heaters should never be placed near other items. They should be kept at least three feet away. Nothing should ever touch or be placed on a space heater. Make sure they are unplugged and turned off when not being used.

Be Careful With Outdoor Grills.

Always place outdoor grills at least 12 feet away from your home. Make sure the grill is properly turned off or coals are completely extinguished before leaving the grill unattended.

■ STEP 6

Pre-arrange for emergency services.

Make Your Residence Look Lived In.

Ask the Post Office and newspaper to hold your deliveries until you return. Leave curtains and blinds in a normal position. Use timers to turn lights or televisions on and off. Ask a trusted friend or neighbor to watch your home. Provide a contact number while you are gone. You also can ask the local police to check your residence while you are away.

■ STEP

Conduct a home inventory.

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In case of loss, create an inventory with each item's make, model, size, type and serial number, if any, and a written description. Once the inventory is complete, make a copy and store it in a safe place.

Buy Renter's Insurance.

Renter's insurance can ensure that you are reimbursed for losses if your personal property is lost, stolen or damaged. It also may cover injuries to guests. Some properties require renters to have insurance.



