

Sheriff's Tip of the Week: Spring Safety

March 28, 2025



With the beginning of spring, many find themselves “spring cleaning” and spending more time outdoors.

Spring is a great time to review a safety checklist for your home and complete a few updates that could save your life.

SMOKE ALARMS

Smoke alarms save lives – if they are powered by a fresh battery. Test smoke alarm batteries monthly and replace the battery at least once a year. Anytime the alarm makes a "chirping" sound, replace the batteries immediately.

Smoke alarms should be located in every bedroom and in the common areas on each floor of a home. Mount them at least 10 feet from the stove to reduce false alarms, less than 12 inches from the ceiling, and away from windows, doors, and ducts.

Smoke alarms can be interconnected wirelessly which means when one sounds, they all sound. This is a quick way to notify everyone in a home if there is a fire.

When installing or replacing smoke alarms, purchase and install new alarms.

Practice how your family will react if smoke alarms go off and consider how that looks at different times through the day or at night. Do not forget to plan your escape from each room and include pets in the process.

The National Fire Protection Association has additional resources on smoke alarm safety.

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an invisible, odorless gas, that can kill you. Anything that burns fuel can potentially become a source of carbon monoxide. CO detectors should be installed in a central location outside each bedroom and on every level of the home.

Similar to smoke alarms, test CO detectors' batteries monthly and replace them at least once a year or sooner if needed.

Consider interconnecting the detectors to alert the entire household at once.

Make sure vents for your gas appliances (fireplace, dryer, stove, furnace, etc.) are free and clear of snow and debris.

Only use gas powered grills and generators outside and away from doors, window, or air intakes.

HOUSEHOLD EMERGENCY PLAN

Every household needs an emergency plan, especially in the event of a natural disaster or other catastrophic event. Take time to create and review that plan with family, household members, and any neighbors that may have a part in the plan.

Consider how your household will react to different emergencies, plan for evacuation routes and alternative routes, and review your emergency supplies. Remember, disasters can strike at any time. Consider what your actions will be if something happens at work, school, the grocery store, and in other areas you frequent.

EMERGENCY PLAN NECESSITIES

A communications plan to outline how your family/household members will contact each another and where you will meet if you need to evacuate.

A shelter-in-place plan. This is often necessary during events where outside air is contaminated and unsafe. Remember to prepare supplies for sealing windows, doors, and air vents with plastic sheeting.

An evacuation plan with various routes and destinations. If your household has access and functional needs, pets, livestock, or expensive equipment, plan on evacuating sooner so there is more time to safely leave the area. Before there is a disaster, research what friends, family, or hotels can accommodate your pets and livestock during an emergency.

A home and car emergency kit. Your emergency kit should include at least one gallon of water per day for each person, at least a 3-day* supply of non-perishable food, flashlight or headlamp and batteries, first aid kit, filter mask, plastic sheeting and duct tape, and medicines.

*On the Oregon coast, it is recommended that households have enough supplies to be self-sufficient for at least 3-weeks. Unable to prepare 3-weeks of supplies? Some emergency supplies are still better than no emergency supplies.

A plan and supplies for your household's unique needs. Don't forget to plan for special circumstances such as mobility challenges, medical conditions, allergies, and other things that impact your household's comfort, health, and safety.

Be prepared, not scared.

Visit Ready.gov for a complete list and other tips for making your family's emergency plan.

For more information and tips visit www.lincolncountysheriff.net