

Smoking safety

Falling asleep while smoking, discarding smouldering cigarette butts, using inadequate ashtrays or smoking near flammable liquids are all hazardous activities.

In Alberta homes, most smoking related fires start in the living room, family room, den or bedroom. Many of these fires are started by someone falling asleep in bed or on upholstered furniture such as a sofa while smoking. Quite often, the fire victim is also impaired by alcohol, drugs or medication and this prevents them from waking up before they suffer fatal smoke inhalation or burns.

Safety tips for smokers

- ◆ Never smoke in bed, or when drowsy from medication or intoxication. A lit cigarette that falls on a pillow, bedding or couch can start a KILLER fire.
- ◆ After a party, check for fallen cigarette butts on sofas and behind cushions. Make sure they have not burned through the fabric as they could smoulder and later erupt into a deadly fire.
- ◆ Keep matches and lighters away from children.
- ◆ Flush cigarette butts and ashes down the toilet. Do not dispose of them in a trash can.
- ◆ Never smoke while handling flammable liquids such as gasoline.
- ◆ Remember ALL matches, lighters, cigarettes, pipes and cigars are potentially dangerous. Treat them with caution.
- ◆ Periodically check the elderly and/or persons with disabilities who smoke and may be less able to save themselves in the event of a fire.

Remember: Fire prevention efforts must not only educate smokers, but their friends and families as well. Everyone must be aware of the dangers of careless smoking. Only then can we reduce the number of injuries and deaths caused by smoking related fires.

For more information, please call (780) 427-8392 or visit www.gov.ab.ca/ma/fco.