Stay safe with 10 steps to protect home, family - ithacajournal.com



hang or tangle, blenders, toasters and such can be pulled off a counter and, in the case of deep-fat fryers, cause serious injury.

• 2. Irons not only cause fires, they cause injuries.

"Irons are a heavy appliance and most household incidents occur when they fall on people -- children more often than not," says John Drengenberg of Underwriters Laboratories. "They should be unplugged and put away when not in use."

• 3. Space heaters cause roughly 10 percent of residential fires.

"Give space heaters space," says Capt. Ronel Brown, spokesman for Louisville Fire and Rescue. "Make sure you place them at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn -- and never use them to dry damp clothes or anything else."

Because they use liquid fuel, kerosene space heaters can be especially dangerous. Never refuel a kerosene heater indoors or while it's hot.

• 4. Candles are increasingly popular, and candle-related fires have increased accordingly. Place candles at least 3 feet from anything flammable -- and well out of reach of pets and children. Never leave them unattended.

• 5. Fireplaces should be checked by a professional for cracks in the chimney flue and excessive buildup of creosote, a combustible waste product of wood fires. Never use paper or unseasoned wood in a fireplace.

• 6. Clothes dryers cause more fires than any other appliance or power tool, resulting in 10 deaths and \$84 million in property damage yearly. The main problem: Lint buildup in the exhaust hose causes the dryer to overheat.

Clean the lint trap after every load. Vacuum the exhaust hose once a year. If your hose is ribbed vinyl, replace it with aluminum pipe that won't kink or catch fire.

• 7. Smoke alarms cut your chance of dying in a house fire by half. Of the three types, only one detects both smoke and flames in a timely fashion.

Ionization alarms excel at detecting fast-flaming fires from paper or flammable liquids. Photoelectric alarms are best at detecting smoke, like that produced in slowstarting fires in bedding and upholstery. Consumer Reports recommends hybrid units with both technologies, such as the First Alert Dual Sensor SA302 (about \$30).

Install one smoke alarm on each floor. Avoid placing them in corners or near windows, doors or air vents. Replace batteries once a year.

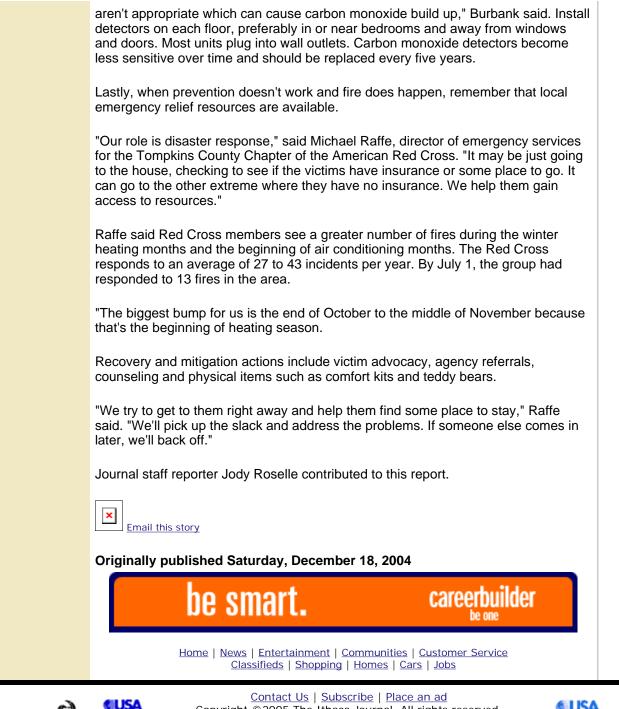
• 8. Escape ladders (\$27 to \$40) should be placed near a window of any bedroom above ground level.

• 9. Fire extinguishers (\$10 to \$20) are recommended for the kitchen, laundry room and garage. Make sure the extinguisher has an ABC rating, meaning it can fight fires caused by paper, wood, cloth, flammable liquids and electrical short circuits.

• 10. Carbon-monoxide detectors signal the presence of an invisible, odorless and tasteless gas that kills about 500 Americans a year. Consumer Reports recommends the Senco Model One, American Sensors CO910 and the Kidde Nighthawk Premium Plus (\$40 to \$50).

Lt. David Burbank, an IFD firefighter, said improper use of heating materials can increase carbon monoxide risks.

"During the colder months people sometimes use heating appliances in ways that



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