Senior Fire Safety
A Fact sheet on Fire Safety for Older Adults

Americans over the age of 65 have a fire death rate nearly twice the national average. For those over 75, this jumps to three times the national average. Whether living independently or in a care facility, there are steps seniors can take to remain safe from fire.

Kitchen Caution
* Don’t leave food unattended on the stove. If you must leave the kitchen, take a wooden spoon or potholder as a reminder.
* Wear short or close fitting sleeves and an apron to avoid catching clothes on fire.
* When cooking, keep a pot lid close by. In case of a pan fire, use the lid to smother the fire.
* Clean the stove and toaster regularly to avoid grease and crumb buildup.
* Don’t use hot pans and dishes.

Heating Hazards
* Keep everything at least one foot from any heat source.
* Unplug electrical appliances and heaters when not using them.
* Never hang clothes near a heater to dry them.
* Don’t leave portable heaters alone or go to sleep while they are on.
* Make sure curtains hang well away from heat sources.

Safe Smoking
* Never smoke in bed or while lying on the couch. Smoke only when alert never when tired or drowsy.
* Use a large, sturdy ashtray or purchase a special “safety ashtray”.
* After using an ashtray, leave it on the kitchen counter or in the sink overnight before emptying.
* Always empty ashtrays into a non-burnable container, such as a metal garbage can.

At Bed Time
* Keep your robe, slippers, eyeglasses and house keys close by the bed.
* Check to be sure that any space heaters are turned off and heat is turned down.
* Close your bedroom door while sleeping.

**Be Prepared**
* Install a smoke alarm on every level of your home. Check smoke alarms monthly.
* If you need a smoke alarm, call your local Fire Department. They may be able to provide you one at no charge.
* Plan your escape routes (two from every room, if possible) in case a fire does strike. Locate two exit stairways from your apartment building. Never use elevators in a fire.

**Calling 9•1•1**
* Place a 9•1•1 sticker on your phone so that you will always have the number at your fingertips during an emergency.
* Call 9•1•1 “From a safe location” for any fire, medical or police emergency.