



Fire Safety

Most of us have heard the sirens of fire and rescue vehicles wailing in the night. If you're away from home at the time, the sound might bring on a feeling of concern for the safety of your family. Or you might even wonder if there's a fire at the place where you work or attend church. In many cases, when the siren sounds, it's too late. The primary contributing factors to church fires include:

1. Arson
2. Mechanical failures
3. Open flames
4. No smoke alarms or sprinkler system

Churches are often the target of vandalism and arson. Churches should always be well lighted outside the premises to eliminate hiding places.

Faulty wiring, light fixtures and improperly functioning heating systems are often at fault in older churches which have not been brought up to local fire codes. Have your system updated every 25 years by an electrical contractor.

Smoke alarms are vital in preventing significant property and casualty losses and should be regularly maintained. Become familiar with the location and operation of fire fighting equipment. Review where fire extinguishers are located and what types of fires they are to be used on. Conduct periodic fire drills to practice fire response procedures.

If using candles remember to extinguish them immediately after each service. Cooking equipment is also associated with a number of fires. Keep the range area free of flammable goods such as paper towels, plastic bowls, utensils and food packaging. Never leave the stove unattended. Avoid grease build up.

Another important point to remember is to store combustibles in a safe area. Combustible materials and fumes from paint, solvents, and other flammables, are responsible for fires at home, work and at church. Fumes can travel a considerable distance and become ignited by a furnace, stove, electrical equipment, or even a lit cigarette. If you need to dispose of flammable liquids, do not pour them down the drain.

Fires can be deadly. Learn the leading causes and become familiar with fire safety practices to eliminate fire safety hazards.

