

New Home Safety Tips

If you are settling into a new home this fall, take steps to ensure home safety and to prepare your family to cope with emergencies.

If you have been in the same house for a while, this is a good time to review and refresh safety procedures. The changeover to Mountain Standard Time (November 6 this year) can be a good annual reminder to secure your home before winter sets in.

The same idea applies at the home level as at the community or even provincial level: careful planning is the key to dealing with emergencies. Here are more tips from the Canada Safety Council, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and other experts:

Emergency Preparedness

- 72-hour preparedness is a common standard used by first responders, all levels of government and non-governmental relief organizations. It means that people should be prepared to cope on their own for the first three days of an emergency such as a blackout, so that first responders can assist those in urgent need. You can download a guide prepared by Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada at the link below.

Fire Safety

- A wise family activity for fall is preparation and rehearsal of a home fire evacuation plan:
 - Make sure everyone knows the nearest exit and an alternative
 - If your home has a second floor or if you live in a multi-storey condo or apartment building, have a special escape plan to get to the ground. Some hardware stores sell collapsible ladders that hook onto a window frame.
- You can also rehearse how you would stay low to avoid smoke and how to check doors before opening them.
- Smoke alarms are vital but batteries should be checked at least once a year. Everyone should know what to do when the alarm goes off.
- Multi-purpose fire extinguishers should be easy to reach with one on every floor. Check them at least once a year and replace any that are more than 10 years old.
- Prevention is key. Do not overload electrical circuits. Store flammables such as gasoline and paint away from potential sparks or flames.

Other Precautions

Talk to your family about the dangers of carbon monoxide, an invisible, odorless gas. Carbon monoxide detectors can save lives and should be checked at least once a year, along with the smoke alarms.

-Adapted from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Canada Safety Council

[Read more](#) about preparing your home for an emergency.