

CANDLES AND INCENSE

Because candles and incense are dangerous sources of fire, no candles or incense are permitted in the residence halls, including candles used for decorative purposes. Candle warmers are permitted. Contact your hall director if you have questions.

- / Extinguish candles when leaving the room or going to sleep. Keep lit candles away from items that can catch fire.
- / Place candles in sturdy, burn-resistant containers that won't tip over and are big enough to collect dripping wax.
- / Avoid candles surrounded by flammable paint, paper, dried flowers, or breakable/meltable containers.
- / Never let candles burn out completely. Extinguish taper and pillar candles when they burn to within two inches of the holder and container candles before the last half-inch of wax begins to melt.
- / Be wary of buying novelty candles, try to determine if they pose a potential fire hazard (if they contain a combustible component for instance). If they do, or if you suspect that they might, inform your local fire department.
- / Use extreme caution when carrying a lit candle, holding it well away from your clothes and combustibles that may be along your path.
- / Don't place lit candles near windows, where blinds or curtains may close or blow over them.
- / Don't use candles in high traffic areas where children or pets could knock them over.
- / Never leave children or pets alone in a room with lit candles.
- / Don't allow older children to light candles in their bedrooms. A forgotten candle or an accident is all it takes to start a fire.
- / During power outages, exercise caution when using candles as a light source. Many destructive fires start when potential fire hazards go unnoticed in the dark.
- / Never use a candle for light when fueling equipment such as a camp fuel heater or lantern.
- / Keep candle wicks short at all times. Trim the wick to one quarter inch (6.4 mm).

For more fire safety tips, check out these links:

U.S. Fire Administration
usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach

Fire Safety for Kids
usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach/children.html

Department of Public Safety
Emergency Preparedness
(573) 651-2547
semo.edu/emergency/procedures

AUTUMN FIRE SAFETY

**BE PREPARED.
STAY SAFE.
HELP OTHERS.
IT'S WHAT WE DO.**



SOUTHEAST MISSOURI
STATE UNIVERSITY • 1873

Department of Public Safety
One University Plaza, MS 7275
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
(573) 651-2215

OUTSIDE THE HOME

- / Never park your car or truck over a pile of leaves. The heat from the vehicle's catalytic converter or exhaust system can ignite the leaves below. The resulting fire could destroy your vehicle.
- / Flammable liquids should not be stored inside the home or in an attached garage or shed. This includes any unused fuel still in the fuel tank. Store this equipment away from your home or drain excess fuel out of the tank before storing. This simple safety precaution will help prevent accidental fires from escaping fuel vapors.
- / Remove fuel from lawn mowers before storing them for the winter.
- / Contact your utility company if trees or branches are not clear of power lines.
- / Prune back trees and rake up leaves and debris. If you live in an open area with a lot of natural vegetation, consider creating a defensible fire zone around your home. Prune the bottom branches from trees and remove shrubs and trees within 20 feet of your home.
- / Don't store cardboard boxes, paper or other flammable materials in the backyard. These materials provide ready fuel for a fire, and all it takes is one spark.



HEATING YOUR HOME

MOST IMPORTANT!

- / Check all smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to make sure they work and replace the batteries.
- / Have a usable fire extinguisher available.

Central Heating

- / Get your central heating system cleaned, inspected, and serviced by a certified HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) contractor every year before using it.
- / If you have a gas heater, make sure you have a sufficient quantity of fully functioning carbon monoxide detectors installed in your home.
- / Keep all flammable materials away from your furnace. This includes, clothing, paint products, toxic materials, cardboard, and more.

Fireplaces and Wood Stoves

- / Have heating appliances serviced and chimney flues examined for defects.
- / Have fireplaces and fireplace dampers checked.
- / Fireplaces should be equipped with an appropriate screen or glass enclosure to prevent sparks from flying out.
- / Wood-burning stoves should be examined and the flue and chimney checked for creosote build-up. Creosote is a deposit from smoke that can build up in the chimney and start a fire.
- / Use only seasoned woods and avoid all soft woods, such as pine, etc.
- / Never use a flammable liquid to start a fireplace.
- / Never overload the hearth with wood or artificial logs. The resulting fire may be too large for the unit.
- / Put ashes outdoors and away from the house in a metal container.

Space Heaters

- / Make sure space heaters are surrounded by at least three feet of empty space.
- / Never place clothing or other objects on a space heater to dry.
- / Don't place space heaters near furniture or drapery.
- / Turn space heaters off when you leave the house or go to bed.
- / Avoid storing combustible items near heaters.

INSIDE THE HOME

- / Cooking fires are the number one cause of home fires and home injuries. The leading cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking. Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove. If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you are cooking. Keep anything that can catch fire — oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels, or curtains — away from your stovetop.
- / Don't overload electrical outlets or use extension cords in place of additional outlets.
- / Check electrical appliances regularly for worn cords and plugs. Don't leave electrical appliances plugged in if they don't need to be.
- / Lack of maintenance is the number one cause of dryer fires. That is why it is critical to clean the lint filter before and after each use and wipe away lint that has accumulated around the drum. Perform periodic checks to ensure that the air exhaust vent pipe is unobstructed (lint accumulation) and the outdoor vent flap opens readily. Don't run the dryer without a lint filter. You are encouraged to not leave the dryer running if you go out, in case it malfunctions.

