



Fire Safety

People aged 65 and older account for 30% of fire fatalities, yet only make up 13% of the U.S. population. Though these numbers are sobering, most incidents like these are easily preventable. As a volunteer, it's a good idea for you to inform yourself about the ways you can help someone maintain fire safety, with basic steps like keeping a list of emergency numbers near the telephone or cleaning the furnace filter.

Things You Can Do

One of the first things you can do for effective fire safety is ensure all smoke alarms are functioning properly. The Fire Department of the City of St. Louis has a free Smoke Alarm Installation Program in which it installs long life lithium-powered smoke alarms designed to last a maximum of 10 years without battery changes. To request a smoke detector for a residential home or apartment, St. Louis City residents can call the Smoke Detector Hotline at (314) 533 - 3406.

Once you've established the smoke alarms are working, sit down and designate tasks that each of you can handle best.

Some things you can do for someone (and teach them to do for themselves):

1. Clean the lint filters on the dryer
2. Ensure they have a flashlight with working batteries
3. Make a list of emergency numbers to have on hand (for any fire emergency, call 9-1-1)
4. Clean furnace filter and make sure all controls are working (look up and call a furnace repair specialist, if needed)
5. Purchase carbon monoxide detectors
6. Make sure windows open easily and that they are able to escape through them, if ever necessary
7. Get a sense of where they might be using open flame in their daily activities (i.e. cooking, lighting candles, smoking cigarettes) and take appropriate action to either limit these activities or ensure they are done safely

Helpful Resources

The St. Louis Fire Department has compiled [a helpful and extensive list](#) of online materials with many safety precautions and tips. Here are just a few:

[Winter Fire Safety](#) for the upcoming season

This [Escape From Fire Brochure](#) provides tips on exiting the house and what to do once you're out.

This [Fire Sense Booklet](#) is packed with tips related to fire safety while cooking, using open flame, and furnishing the home safely. Check it out!

The St. Louis Fire Department also offers free home fire safety surveys and assistance with designing home fire escape plans.