

Easy Ways to Reduce the Risk of Fire in Your Home

- Have a good, working smoke detector (and have the batteries checked on a regular basis). *
- Try to avoid smoking if you are tired, drinking, or on medications that are likely to make you drowsy.
- Use large deep ashtrays, or deep coffee cans with sand to extinguish your cigarettes, pipe ash or cigars.
- Make sure all cigarettes are completely out when emptying ashtrays (wet the butts).

- Empty your ashtrays frequently.

- Use the types of surfaces that are less likely to burn around your favourite chair or other smoking place.

- Have a good fire extinguisher near the kitchen. Know how to use it.



- Plan escape routes for your home in case there is a fire.

- **Never smoke if you are near or use an oxygen tank.**

* There are special, inexpensive smoke detectors available for people who have difficulty hearing.

Old enough to know better.
Smart enough to do something about it.

Between 25 and 60% of cigarette-fire deaths occur when people smoke while under the influence of medications or alcohol.

Want to find out more about fire prevention in your community?

Please Contact:

Seeking Solutions



October is
Fire Prevention
Month

A Mature Smoker's
Guide to Keeping Safe

Seeking Solutions

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Did You Know?

- Fires started by cigarette, cigar or pipe smoking are the leading known cause of fire-related deaths in Canada.
- More than 70 people on average die in Canada each year because of cigarette fires. Many of them are children or older adults.
- People who have difficulty walking or getting around have a higher risk of injury or death if a fire happens.



Many older adults say they know how to put out a small fire.

Would you know how?



Do you smoke?

...Have a favourite chair in front of television?

...Like to keep a drink and cigarettes on the side table?

...Take medications for your cold or to help you sleep?

Smoking while taking certain medications or drinking alcohol can be a recipe for disaster.

It is quite easy to happen:

- Put the supper on the stove, sit down for a smoke and a drink and accidentally doze off. Supper burns and starts a kitchen fire.
- Or your cigarette drops into the chair. It smolders and catches fire later while you sleep.

Smoldering materials can make people lose consciousness. This puts them at greater risk of injury or death from fire.

What to Watch Out For

Alcohol does not mix with many medications and herbal remedies that are commonly used by older adults.

These include:

- some anti-histamines (check the label on the medication to see whether or not it says “non-drowsy”),
- “long lasting- slow release” cold remedies,
- some antidepressants -- particularly those known as TCAs or MAO Inhibitors,
- many anti-anxiety or sleep medications (e.g. Valium, Serenax, Normison, Ativan and Xanax (TM)),
- some herbal remedies (e.g. valerian, kava kava, Chinese skullcap),

And the list goes on.

Combining alcohol with any of these can leave people sleepy, light headed, dizzy and make them less alert.

These effects may occur whether you take them before, after or while drinking.