



Fire Hazard Inspection Checklist

Cooking Hazards

- Keep anything that can catch fire — potholders, wooden or plastic utensils, paper or plastic bags, food packaging, towels or appliance cords — away from the stovetop and other sources of heat.
- Never leave cooking unattended, not even for a few minutes.
- Always turn off cooking equipment after each use.
- Unplug toasters and other small appliances when not in use.
- If you lose power, be sure all cooking equipment is turned off.
- Wear short or close-fitting sleeves when cooking.
- Don't put metal objects in the microwave unless they are specifically designed and approved for use in the microwave. Always use microwave safe dishes.
- Keep your oven and stove clean.
- Pay careful attention when cooking with oil. The oil can ignite and quickly get out of control.
- Keep the pan lid and a cooking mitt within arm's reach, in case the oil ignites.
- Make sure pans and cooking utensils are dry. Remember, oil and water don't mix.
- If the oil starts to boil, turn the burner off immediately.



- Don't overfill the pan or other cooking container with oil. You need enough room to allow for the food to be added. If you have too much oil, it is likely to overflow and hit the burner, where it can catch fire.

Electrical Equipment and Appliances:

- Have a qualified electrician inspect your facility, especially if you have added a substantial electrical load or you have an older facility.
- Don't overload electrical circuits. If you have areas where a large number of appliances will be used, have an electrician add additional circuits and outlets.
- Be sure plugs fit securely in outlet receptacles. If a plug is loose, either the appliance cord needs to be replaced or the outlet has deteriorated and needs to be replaced. Never force a plug into an outlet if it doesn't fit.
- Run cords through wire guides, cord runners or secure them with cord keepers out of the way of foot traffic. Be sure to follow instructions provided by the guide or runner manufacturer. Bundling cords tightly can cause a fire. Never use a staple gun to secure cords.
- Don't use extension cords. They are designed for temporary use only and aren't permitted in many states.
- Inspect resident appliances to be sure they are working properly and don't have frayed or damaged cords. Place a dated inspection sticker on inspected appliances and re-inspect them each year.
- Be sure all appliances and electrical equipment have a UL symbol.



Clothes Dryers:

- Keep lint filters clean. For residential dryers, clean the lint filter after each load of clothes.
- Wash the lint filter of residential dryers with warm soapy water and a bristle brush every few months to remove residue from dryer sheets and fabric softeners.
- Vacuum the lint that accumulates underneath the lint filter and behind the dryer.
- Clean the dryer vent and exhaust duct regularly.
- Have a qualified service person inspect and maintain your dryer each year. Be sure they clean the interior of the dryer chassis.
- Keep the area around the dryer clean and free of clutter.
- Use a smooth metal duct. A flexible plastic or foil type duct can easily trap lint and is more susceptible to kinks or crushing, which can greatly reduce the airflow.
- If your dryer uses gas, be sure the gas cutoff valve is labeled. If a dryer catches fire, the fire department must know where to cut off the gas.
- Never dry soiled rags or mop heads in the dryer. Cleaning materials or cooking oil left on them can catch on fire when heated.

Flammable Liquids:

- Check the labels on all chemicals and cleaning supplies for safe storage requirements.



- Store flammable liquids in approved safety containers or fire resistant cabinets that are clearly labeled. Check with the fire marshal for your specific storage requirements.
- Keep the lids closed on flammable liquid containers when not in use.
- Never leave soiled cleaning rags inside the facility. The rags can spontaneously catch on fire. Wash cleaning rags or throw them away in a metal trashcan outside the facility. Never put them in the clothes dryer.

Heating Equipment:

- Don't use portable space heaters.
- Install and maintain all heating equipment according to manufacturer's instructions. Have heating systems professionally maintained prior to the start of every heating season.
- If your codes and regulations permit the use of a fireplace or woodstove, have a qualified professional clean the chimney each year.
- Keep all combustible materials such as paper, boxes, upholstered furniture, and drapes at least 3 feet away from heating devices and equipment.

Exits:

- Discuss your locking arrangements with your local fire marshal.
- Keep exit routes clear.



- Keep the exit paths from the building to the street clear and free of ice. Dispose of trash left inside and outside the facility.
- Keep fire and smoke doors closed. If they are held open by special magnetic devices, keep boxes, wheelchairs and other materials away from the doors so they can close if there's a fire.

Pressurized Oxygen:

- Keep cylinders and oxygen tubing at least 10 feet away from any heat source or open flame, such as matches, stoves, woodstoves, or fireplaces.
- Never allow residents to smoke while using concentrated oxygen and never allow anyone to smoke near an area where oxygen is being used or stored. Post "no smoking, oxygen in use" signs.
- Don't allow residents to use oil-based products, such as face or hand creams, oil-based hair products, petroleum jelly products or aerosol sprays if they use oxygen. The combination of concentrated oxygen, oil-based toiletries and a spark from an electrical appliance, such as a hair dryer, electric razor, or heating pad, could start a fire.
- Keep cylinders away from all flammable materials, such as oil, grease, aerosols, paints, gasoline, and solvents.
- Secure cylinders at all times to keep them from falling over.
- If cylinders use protective caps, keep the caps on when not in use.
- Store cylinders following the requirements of your local fire marshal's office. Large numbers of cylinders must be stored outdoors or in specially constructed, well-ventilated rooms.



Other Hazards:

- Don't allow candles in the facility.
- If smoking is permitted, limit smoking to a designated area only.
- Supervise residents when they smoke.
- Keep smoking materials in a secure, locked location accessible only to staff.
- Develop a guest fire safety policy and post the policy at the entrance to your facility. Be sure all family members know about the policy.

Remember, you can identify and eliminate most fire hazards before they become a danger to you, your residents and your facility.