



General Home Safety

Presented by Salus University Occupational Therapy Program

Top Tips for Fire & Carbon Monoxide (CO) Safety

- Install smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas. It is especially important to have detectors in the basement if your laundry or furnace is located there.
- Test smoke alarms every month. If they're not working, change the batteries.
- If a fire occurs in your home, **get out, stay out and call for help**. Never go back inside for anything or anyone.
- Talk with all family members about a fire escape plan and practice the plan twice a year.

Smoke Alarms & Carbon Monoxide Detectors

In General:

- If you have battery-powered smoke alarms or carbon monoxide detectors, replace the batteries at least once a year.
- Replace your smoke alarms every 10 years and carbon monoxide detectors every 5-7 years as both become less sensitive over time.

To save time, money, and ensure a working smoke detector use a 10-year Lithium 10 Year Sealed Smoke Alarm

- **Provides full 10 years of protection- no need to change batteries**
- 10-year sealed smoke alarm eliminates the need to change batteries
- Average Price: \$18.00 - \$25.00

Plug-in CO Alarm With Battery Backup

- Average Price: \$21.00

Convenience of **Dual Smoke Alarm and Carbon Monoxide Detector**

- Basic battery operated photoelectric smoke/CO combination alarm
- Average Price: \$30.00

How to get FREE Smoke Alarms

Did you know that if you live in Philadelphia you can call 3-1-1 or contact Philly311 via Philly311 mobile app, email or the website for a free smoke alarm?

- The Fire Department who will contact the customer to arrange delivery and installation of a smoke alarm with a 10-year lithium battery. Please allow up to 60 days for installation by the fire department.

Fire Extinguishers

- **It is recommended to have a fire extinguisher on every level of the home, in an easily accessible location**
 - An extinguisher rated “A-B-C” is recommended for home use.
 - Many fire extinguisher models are designed for one-time use and cannot be recharged. If it is used, it may “slow leak” so that it will not work the next time it is needed
 - **Fire extinguishers can expire!** Check the manufacturer's instructions for replacing or recharging fire extinguishers, yearly
- **If you try to use a fire extinguisher on a fire and the fire does not immediately die down**, drop the extinguisher and get out. Most portable extinguishers empty in 8 seconds.

Low cost options.

- Kidde 2-Pack Kidde1-A:B:C Recreational Fire Extinguisher
 - Available at Home depot, homedepot.com or many other only retailers
 - Average Price \$29.97
- Tundra Fire Extinguishing Spray
 - Smaller size
 - Available at Home depot, homedepot.com or many other only retailers
 - Average Price: \$12.00



Fire Prevention

Outlet Safety (Nicole)

What should you look out for?

- Common hazards include sparking, visible burn marks or smells like smoke, buzzing and popping sounds, or hot to the touch

What should you do?

- Make sure that outlet covers are intact and no wires are exposed
- Do not plug power strips into power strips
- Do not plug extension cords into power strip
- Plug major appliances such as washer, dryer, refrigerator, and air conditioners directly into a wall outlet. Do not plug into surge protectors or extension cords.
- Discard appliances with damaged wires or cords
- When in doubt call an electrician if you feel outlets or electric devices are unsafe or pose a fire risk

Home Heating Safety

Electric Space Heaters

- **Before using an electric space heater, read all safety instructions.** Many non-electric space heaters (kerosene, gasoline) are not safe for indoor use.

- **Always plug electric space heaters directly into the wall outlet.** Do not plug additional electrical devices into the same outlet.
- **Never leave an electric space heater unattended.** TURN OFF electric space heater when leaving a room.
- **Keep surrounding areas free from all objects.** Keep electric space heaters at least 3 feet away from papers, bags, clothing, curtains, rugs, and furniture.
- **Place electric space heaters on level surfaces.** Do not place the heater on cabinets, carpets, furniture, or any area that can overheat and result in a fire.
- **If you are purchasing a new electric space heater-** look for devices with “auto-off” features that will shut off the device if it falls over or overheat

Radiators

- **Avoid contact with the radiator and use caution when moving around a radiator.** The metal pipes become extremely hot, which can cause burns if touched.
- **Keep the area around the radiator open.** Keep cloth or wooden furniture that can catch on fire away from the radiator. Do not let curtains hang near the radiator.

Lighting

Why does lighting matter?



- Good lighting is important to make daily tasks easier and decrease the risk of tripping, slipping, or falling.

What are the main types of lighting?

- Ambient (General/overhead lighting): provides bright light throughout the room
- Task (Practical lighting): to light up a specific area to work on tasks
- Accent (Decorative lighting): to light up a certain area of a room (aka highlighting)

How to Read a Light Bulb Label

- **Brightness**
 - Lumen: unit measuring amount of brightness a light source emits
 - The more lumens, the brighter the bulb!
- **Estimated Yearly Energy Cost**
 - How much you will pay per year to use the light bulb
- **Life**
 - How long the light bulbs will last
- **Light Appearance**
 - Kelvin: primary unit used to measure the temperature of the light
 - The higher the Kelvins, the whiter the light!
 - Lower temperature bulbs = warm-whites
 - Higher temperature bulbs = cool-whites
 - **Warm:** aid in relaxation & falling asleep
 - Good for bedrooms & living rooms
 - **Neutral:** help you stay awake & do work
 - Good for **ambient lighting** in kitchens, bathrooms, and offices
 - **Cool:** good for **task lighting** such as reading, under or inside cabinet lighting, and above sinks or bathtubs

Lighting Facts Per Bulb	
Brightness	870 lumens
Estimated Yearly Energy Cost \$1.57	
Based on 3 hrs/day, 11 c/kWh Cost depends on rates and use	
	
Life	5.5 years
Based on 3 hrs/day	
Light Appearance	
	
Energy Used	13 watts



- **Energy Used**
 - Watt: a unit of power to measure the amount of energy used by a light source
 - How much “juice” is being taken from your wall
 - **Lower wattage bulbs use less electricity & are more energy-efficient, so they are less expensive to use and are a lower fire hazard risk**

Best type of light bulb: Light-emitting diode (LED)

- 2-pack @ Home Depot: \$8.97 (1600LM, 100W replacement, uses 13 watts)
 - Come in a dim-to-warm option!
 - Long-lasting, inexpensive to operate, creates very little heat



Falls Prevention

General ways to decrease the likelihood of a fall

- Stay fit - If you are healthy enough participate in balance exercises or walking
 - Many health insurance companies cover gym memberships for older adults through Silver Sneakers or a similar program
- Stay healthy - get a good night's sleep, eat nutritious food, take medication as prescribed
 - Remember even if you are generally healthy, a recent medication change, surgery or illness can increase your risk of falling
 - Many health insurance companies will also cover an appointment with a nutritionist
- Use any mobility device that your doctor recommends for you (canes, walkers) and ask your doctor to see a Physical Therapist if you feel unsteady
- Wear sturdy footwear that has a back whenever possible

How can your environment decrease the likelihood of a fall?

- **Lighting**
 - See the lighting section and make sure you have well lit pathways both inside and outside your home
 - Use motion activated night lights on your path from your bed to the bathroom for late night bathroom breaks
- **Potential Modifications**
 - Consider Grab bars in your tub or shower if you have noted changes in your balance or have frequent medication changes
 - Make Sure your inside and outside handrails are sturdy
 - Use Non-skid strips on stairs and secure area rugs
 - Rug Traction Anti-Slip Rubber Tape @ Home Depot for \$10.35
 - When in doubt call a professional if you feel you need assistance with any home modifications
- **Avoid Clutter**--come to our Decluttering class on February 28, virtually through Center on Hill. Here are a few general tips:
 - Use the "30 Seconds or less" rule
 - Tasks that take 30 seconds or less, should be completed right away
 - Such as weeding out junk mail, washing your dish, and throwing away rotten food

- Think twice before buying an item.
- Switch to electronic records to avoid bills in the mail
- If keeping magazines/newspapers for one article, rip the article out and save it in a binder.
- Reward your removal of clutter! It is not an easy task.

Bathroom Safety

- **Keep area well-lit**
- Use bath mats with rubber backing
- Use Shower/tub strips to reduce slipping
- **Toilet Seat Riser:** By raising the seat with a toilet seat riser, you may prevent falling when using the restroom
- **Keep the Floor Clear:** Make sure that the floor is kept clear and free of any debris or clothing that could become a hazard
- **Keep the Floor Dry:** Wet or damp floors create a very dangerous situation.
- Consider having a tub/shower bench or grab bars installed if you feel unsteady

Kitchen Safety

- **Keep area well-lit**
 - Increase task lighting at sink, stove, and work areas and use the highest wattage bulb approved for all fixtures.
- **Reduce clutter** and allow for easy navigation of space.
- Do not block frequently used cabinets with chairs or other furniture.
- Add a **non-slip mat** by sink or areas where water splashes
- **Keep floors clear**, do not store items on the floor
- Do not leave cabinets or drawers open
- Avoid using floor wax and don't walk on just cleaned floors until they have completely dried.
- **Store frequently used or heavy items within reach;** avoid storing in high cabinets to decrease risk of injury.

Considerations for COVID-19

I want or need a handyperson to do some work on my home, how can I stay safe?

- Always use reputable and trusted companies
- Verify they are from the company before allowing them to enter
- Ask them to wear a mask
- You personally wear a mask
- Ask them to sanitize or wash their hands immediately on entering your house
- Disinfect all surfaces, including door knobs and switches after they leave
- Wash your hands after disinfecting

Salus University Health Clinics visit us at salusuhealth.com

Speech-Language Institute

8380 Old York Road, Suite 2100
Elkins Park, PA 19027
Phone: 215-780-3150

The Eye Institute

Oak Lane
1200 West Godfrey Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19141

Chestnut Hill
Chestnut Hill Plaza
7630 Germantown Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19118

Phone: 215-276-6111

Pennsylvania Ear Institute

8380 Old York Road, Suite 1200
Elkins Park, PA 19027
Phone: 215-780-3180

Occupational Therapy Institute

Located inside The Eye Institute
1200 West Godfrey Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19141
Email: oti@salus.edu

Additional Resources

Ralston My Way

Ralston My Way is a non-profit home care agency that focuses on helping individuals age within the community. Services for individuals aged 55+ and who reside in Northwest Philadelphia include: affordable home care, transportation, house cleaning, handyman repairs, and yard work. Please call to learn more about the services offered.

PROVIDER DETAILS

7051 Germantown Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19119
Phone: 215-525-5470
Email: information@ralstonmyway.org

HomeNet Solutions Inc.

A free contractor referral service that has been serving homeowners across the Delaware Valley since 1998. With just one call you receive referrals from our network of over 1300 pre-qualified and insured contractors. We refer to professionals who can assist you with a wide range of home improvement and repair services including remodeling, carpentry, electrical services, flooring, windows, roofing, and more.

PROVIDER DETAILS

HomeNet Solutions Inc.

3959 Welsh Road Suite 309 Willow Grove, PA 19090

Phone: 610-787-0529

Email: information@homenetsolutions.com

PCA Senior Housing Assistance Repair (SHARP) Program

The Senior Housing Assistance Repair Program or SHARP is a minor home repair program provided by Philadelphia Corporation for Aging for Philadelphia. To qualify homeowners must be 60 years and older, have the consumer's name on the deed of property, have structurally sound and functioning utilities, and meet income guidelines. Please call for more information and to see if you qualify.

PROVIDER DETAILS

PCA 642 N. Broad St.

Philadelphia, PA 19130

Administration: 215-765-9000

PCA Helpline: 215-765-9040/215-765-9041 (TDD)

Additional Helpful Products

- **Plug-in LED Motion Sensor Night Light,**
 - Warm White LED Night Light with Dusk to Dawn Motion Sensor, Adjustable Brightness for Bedroom, Bathroom, Kitchen, Hallway, Stairs
 - Average Price: \$18.99 (4 Pack) @ Amazon
- **Motion Sensor Light, Cordless Battery-Powered LED Night Light, Stick-Anywhere**
 - Warm White
 - Average Price: \$16.99 (3 Pack) @ Amazon
- **Toilet Bowl Night Light Motion Activated - Warm white**
 - Average Price: \$15.99 (2 Pack) @ Amazon
- **Rug Traction Anti-Slip Rubber Tape**
 - Average Price: \$10.35 @ Home Depot
- **Non-Slip Tub Tread Strips in White (6-Pack)**
 - Average Price: \$6.98 @ Home Depot
- **Laundry Backpack with Shoulder Straps and Pocket**
 - Average Price \$16.99 @ Amazon

