

MAFES Dawg Tracks

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MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
MS AGRICULTURAL AND
FORESTRY EXPERIMENT STATION

*Fire Safety
is Up to You*

The subject of fires has a soft place in my soul. Our home burned when I was a small child. Fortunately, my Dad got us out, including my pet beagle. I have a real hang up when any type of fire is mentioned. I endeavor to remind folks to always be on the lookout for potential fire hazards.

Following are some facts regarding fires which, in my opinion, are reason enough to talk about fires and their causes:

FIRE FACTS-

- ✓ In 2014 – There were 1,298,000 fires reported in the USA, resulting in 3,275 civilian deaths, 115,775 civilian injuries, and \$11.6 billion in property damage.
- ✓ 494,000 were structure fires, causing 2,860 deaths, 13,435 injuries, and \$9.8 billion in property damage.
- ✓ 193,500 vehicle fires, causing 345 deaths, 1,450 injuries, and \$1.3 billion in property damage.
- ✓ 610,500 were outside and other fires, causing 670 deaths, 900 injuries, and \$237 million in property damage.

WHAT CAUSES FIRES?

As we mentioned above, thousands of people are killed and injured in workplace fires. Many of these fires can be prevented by being more careful and knowing how to spot fire hazards. Some of the common causes of fires are:

- ~ Smoking
- ~ Poor housekeeping
- ~ Faulty electrical equipment
- ~ Overloaded circuits
- ~ Chemical reactions

TIPS FOR FIRE PREVENTION-

- Refrain from smoking around flammable materials, like wood, paper, and hay. If you smoke, do so in designated areas and be doubly careful to extinguish the butt.
- Keep your work area neat. Use the proper trash containers. Don't leave combustible materials lying around on the floor or ground. Keep all exits clear!
- Be on the lookout for potential fire hazards such as frayed electrical cords, overloaded circuits and sparks from equipment or chemical spills. If you spot one of these, report it immediately to your supervisor.
- Store chemicals in the correct labeled containers - make sure the lids are on tight. Don't use paint in areas with poor ventilation.
- Check the labels and the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) so you will know which are flammable and the ones that can be safely mixed with other chemicals.

IF YOU SPOT SMOKE OR FLAMES-

- Review your fire escape plan with all employees - if you do not have one you need to develop one.
- Act quickly but don't panic!
- Immediately get to safety and alert other employees as you are going. Be sure that they know the exits and location of fire extinguishers.
- Notify the fire department. If you can't safely do so - get to someone that can. Make sure your people know where the fire department's number is posted.
- If you are in an enclosed area and the door feels warm or you see smoke, **don't open the door!** Look for an alternate route and yell for help.
- If you are escaping a building that is in flames, stay low (on your knees) as you are exiting. You will breathe less smoke near the floor.

OTHER FIRE SAFETY TIPS-

- ✓ Know the location of all the fire extinguishers and make sure that all other employees do as well.
- ✓ If you spot an extinguisher with the pin or tag missing, or the gauge shows that it is discharged – notify your supervisor.
- ✓ Wear the appropriate clothing if you're working near open flames or sparks. If you have questions about your clothing, check with your supervisor.
- ✓ Don't attempt to fight a fire unless:
 - ~ You have been properly trained to use an extinguisher.
 - ~ The fire is small and is confined in a small area.
 - ~ Everyone is safely out of the way.
 - ~ You have an escape route.
 - ~ The fire department has been notified.

You should never attempt to fight a chemical fire unless you have been properly trained and have notified the local fire department and are wearing the proper PPE.

DON'T:

- **Smoke near flammable materials or liquids like paper, wood, hay, or anything else that would easily burn.**
- **Store chemicals in unlabeled containers.**
- **Operate a fire extinguisher unless you have been properly trained.**

DO:

- **Report any fire hazards - including blocked exits.**
- **Dispose of all trash in proper containers.**
- **Stay low if you are escaping from a building on fire.**
- **Know the location of all fire extinguishers.**

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Excerpts: www.nfpa.org/safe-information/fire-prevention
www.gemplers.com

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**BE SAFE RIGHT FROM THE
START!!**

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**LIFE DID'T BEGIN WITH AN ACCIDENT
DON'T END IT WITH ONE!**