

Older Consumers Safety Checklist

From the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission



Falls and fires are two leading causes of unintentional injuries and deaths among adults 65 and older. About two-thirds of all hospital emergency room visits by older people involve falls. Older adults have a higher death rate from fires than the general population. Make your home safer by following these tips.

To help prevent falls:

- When using stairs, always grip the handrails. Keep stairs well lit.
- Keep floors cleared and slip resistant. Remove loose carpets, cords, and other items you could trip over. Be sure all rugs, mats, and other surfaces are non-skid.
- Install grab bars and slip-resistant surfaces in your bathroom.
- Use only stable step stools with a top handrail. Don't climb alone – have someone nearby to help you.
- Stand up slowly from a sitting or lying down position.
- Be sure your telephones and emergency numbers are easily accessible – so you can get help if you fall.

To help prevent fire deaths and injuries:

- Install a smoke alarm in every bedroom, outside every sleeping area, and on every floor of your home.
- Install a carbon monoxide (CO) alarm outside every sleeping area.
- Don't smoke in bed.
- Keep space heaters away from flammable materials. Hire a professional to check all fuel-burning appliances, including fireplaces, every year.
- Don't wear loose-fitting clothing with long sleeves near ranges or ovens. Store combustibles away from these and all heat-producing appliances.
- Practice an emergency fire escape plan.

For more safety information, visit CPSC's Web site at www.cpsc.gov.