

Spring Cleaning for Safety



As the flowers start blooming and people start spending more time outside, it's a natural time to do some spring cleaning. Most people have a few things to tidy up in their living space, and some members of our community struggle to part with any items. Over time, this tendency to collect can lead to a home environment that is so filled with possessions that residents can no longer use the rooms as they are designed. In extreme cases, this can create fire hazards for themselves, their neighbors and first responders.

Many fire departments experience serious fire injuries and deaths as a result of responding to homes where there is compulsive hoarding behavior. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), between three and five percent of the population are dealing with compulsive hoarding tendencies. In addition to quality of life and behavioral health implications, hoarding can be a fire hazard when blocked exits prevent escape from the home. Additionally, a person may become injured by tripping over things or having materials fall on them. The accumulation of items can also pose a threat called "excessive fire load", this can lead to collapse and significant risk to both the tenant and first responders. For the safety of everyone involved, it is important in each residence to maintain clear pathways with two exits from each room and working smoke alarms.

If you have someone in your life who is dealing with hoarding tendencies, whether it be a tenant or personal connection, stay alert to the needs of their household. They may need some specific reminders, outside assistance and compassion to keep their space(s) fire safe.

Visit the NFPA website to learn more <http://www.nfpa.org/public-education/by-topic/safety-in-the-home/hoarding-and-fire-safety>

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Fire is Everyone's Fight

Help us by joining the fight. According to the United States Fire Administration, a home fire is the most dangerous fire threat to your family. Approximately 16,000 people are injured or die, in house fires annually. Nationwide, fire departments work to change how people think about fire, and fire safety, through education aimed at reducing home fire injuries, deaths, and property loss. While Clallam County Fire District 3 is here to protect our community, Fire is Everyone's Fight and we need your help; we all play a role in ensuring that fires don't start.

The good news is that your role is simple and pretty intuitive. By following these simple safety tips you can significantly reduce the likelihood of yourself, or loved ones, experiencing the tragedy of a home fire.

Cooking is the leading cause of household fires.

When cooking, avoid wearing loose clothing that can easily catch on fire;
Keep anything that is flammable, such as towels, away from cooking surfaces;
Turn pot handles away from you to reduce the chances of scalding;
Maintain a three-foot, kid-free, zone around cooking areas.

Smoke alarms can make the difference between life and death.

Install smoke alarms inside and outside sleeping areas and on all levels of your home;
Change smoke alarm batteries every year and test your smoke alarms monthly;
Replace smoke alarms that are more than 10 years old.

Don't forget your outbuildings!

Outbuildings often contain many hazardous materials and flammable items. Not only are these items hazardous if the building catches on fire, but they can also be burdensome to get rid of if you don't know the correct receptacles for disposal. Please see Clallam County's website (link at the end) to find the correct disposal area for those items that you no longer need. Removing them will not only enhance your spring cleaning, but it will also make your building a safer environment for you and first responders should you have a fire!
<http://www.clallam.net/hhs/environmentalhealth/hwhousehold.html>

Every second counts!

Practice your home fire drill annually;
Identify two exits from every room;
Have a designated meeting location outside your home.

Eastern Clallam County Community Emergency Response Team Activities

Eastern Clallam County Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers have been busy during the Pandemic. Last March, their first assignment during the Pandemic was to help when the City of Sequim and Clallam County Fire District 3 joined forces and stood-up the Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) in Sequim; collaborating with the Emergency Operations Center in Port Angeles. CERT volunteers were instrumental in the ECC's communication center and Check-In area for daily COVID-19 Screenings.

Their second assignment, for 20 weeks, was when they handed out boxes of food to citizens in need. In total 19,577 boxes of food were distributed in collaboration with Sequim Food Bank. This equates to 196 tons of food distributed to 8,494 families! That mission was taken over by local service groups, in order for CERT to concentrate on their third assignment – COVID-19 vaccinations. Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, the City of Sequim and Fire District 3 teamed up to provide vaccinations to Eastern Clallam County. CERT played a vital role in ensuring the overall process was organized and ran efficiently. Statistics change daily, although as of this newsletter, 31% of Sequim's population has been vaccinated with one dose and 22% are fully vaccinated! This could not have been accomplished without great collaboration with Jamestown Health Clinic and the City of Sequim's Public Works Department.

Please join District 3 in sending our most sincere thank you's to all of those CERT individuals; these volunteers stepped up during an unprecedented time and supported endeavors that otherwise would have been impossible!

THANK YOU CERT VOLUNTEERS!

