

Burning down the house: Tips to avoid living out an '80s hit song



By Chris Loomis, Safety Expert

With all due respect to the song, burning down the house is not something that the majority of us are interested in doing. We try to protect our home and automobiles the best that we can, but there is always something more we could be doing. Keeping your home and family safe and secure should be the top priority.



This is not the ideal way to clean your house!

Although it is mostly just common sense, keep the following tips in mind:

1. Install smoke detectors (and keep them hooked up) on every level of your home, near every sleeping area and near the laundry room, the kitchen and the furnace/hot water heater area.
2. If you must smoke, do not do so in bed and always extinguish all cigarettes, cigars and pipes completely before going to bed. Do not empty ashtrays directly into the trash can and never leave a smoldering cigarette alone.
3. Candles should only be used in designated holders and never left unattended. (Side note: no candles for homes with small children or large dogs with swishing tails. Bad, bad idea.)
4. Establish and practice a fire safety drill. Do not schedule it for every time your mother-in-law comes, that is not nice. (Remember, jokes are in the eyes of the beholder.)
5. Make sure that your children know the basics of fire safety including calling 9-1-1, 'stop drop and roll' and crawling out of smoke.

A final tip: If your home is older than your children, it might be time to have the wiring checked and updated, especially if you have added new equipment to your breaker's load. New computers, new printers or other electronics may overload the wiring and cause a major fire. Be safe rather than sorry.

Safety is an attitude that begins in our thoughts. We can create an accident free environment at work and at home if we believe we can and are committed to the process.

Chris has more than 20 years of professional safety experience. As the marketing manager for DuPont's environmental and safety services, he has seen first-hand the safety challenges faced by plant personnel while working with more than 600 chemical, petrochemical, and manufacturing facilities. Chris is an award-winning international safety speaker and author.

**For more information or to book your next safety speaker, please visit
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