

# SAFETY CORNER

## Public Safety Newsletter

TOPIC: Home Hazard Inspection  
Written By: Fire Marshal Steve Nedved  
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How many times have you left the house in the morning and wondered, "Did I turn off the stove?" With our busy lives, the safety of our homes and families are sometimes relegated to the back of our minds – an afterthought as we hop in the car to start the day.

I want you to make sure that the stove burner is turned off or the damaged electrical cord you've been meaning to fix is your top priority during Fire Prevention Week, October 5-11. The theme of this year's campaign, "Prevent Home Fires," focuses on preventing the leading causes of home fires – cooking, heating and electrical equipment, and smoking materials.

According to the latest statistics from the nonprofit National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), there were an estimated 396,000 reported home structure fires in 2006, resulting in 2,580 civilian deaths, 12,500 civilian injuries and \$6.8 billion in direct damage in the United States. Home fires caused 80% of civilian deaths and 76% of injuries.

While the statistics are daunting, most home fires are easily preventable when we narrow our focus and take personal steps to increase our safety. One way to do this is by proactively combing through each room in your home to find signs of danger and fix them. I encourage Mitchell community residents and their families to put their safety first by performing a home hazards inspection during Fire Prevention Week. You can download a checklist at [www.firepreventionweek.org](http://www.firepreventionweek.org) or call 995-8400 and ask me or any member of the fire division to do a home hazards inspection.

There are also a number of simple steps that you can put into action to keep your home safe from fire:

- Cooking: Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period time, turn off the stove.
- Heating: Keep all things that can burn, such as paper, bedding or furniture, at least 3 feet away form heating equipment.
- Electrical: Replace cracked and damaged electrical cords; use extension cords from temporary wiring only. Consider having additional circuits or receptacles added by a qualified electrician.
- Smoking: If you smoke, smoke outside; wherever you smoke, use deep, sturdy ashtrays.

As a firefighter, paramedic and the Fire Marshal for the City of Mitchell, fire prevention is always on my mind. I hope that you use the checklist and home fire prevention tips to put your safety first during Fire Prevention Week, and year-round.

Sincerely,

Steve Nedved  
Fire Marshal

If you would like to learn about certain topics please email [cindy@mitchelldps.com](mailto:cindy@mitchelldps.com) and reference Safety Corner.

