

Verdugo Fire Academy
... more than fighting fires

What is Fire Prevention? (2 of 2)

- All fire fighters should work to prevent fires and educate the public about fire risks and hazards.
- Fire fighters should understand:
 - ◆ Objectives of fire prevention.
 - ◆ Delineation of responsibilities.
 - ◆ Their role in fire prevention.

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What is Fire Prevention? (1 of 2)

- A range of activities that are intended to prevent the outbreak of fires or to limit the consequences if a fire does occur.
 - ◆ Enacting and enforcing fire codes.
 - ◆ Conducting property inspections.
 - ◆ Presenting fire safety education.
 - ◆ Performing fire cause investigation.

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Introduction continued...

- As a probationary firefighter your duties usually include performing fire safety inspections in residential occupancies and conducting station tours.




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Fire Codes (3 of 9)

- In some cases, one basic set of regulations applies throughout a state, and sometimes local jurisdictions can adopt more stringent regulations.
- ◆ The *National Fire Codes* are a set of documents produced by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to address fire and safety issues (model codes).





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Fire Codes (2 of 9)

- Enacted to ensure a minimum level of fire safety in the home and workplace environments.
- Enforced through a legal process, similar to the way speed limits and other traffic violations are enforced.

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Fire Codes (1 of 9)

- Regulations that have been legally adopted by a governmental body with the authority to pass laws and enforce safety regulations.
- Note: in Jan. 2008 CA adopted the International Fire Code.



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Fire Codes (6 of 9)


- Fire codes require:
 - ◆ Unobstructed exits
 - ◆ Unlocked exits
 - ◆ Maintained fire alarm/sprinkler systems



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Fire Codes (5 of 9)


- Closely related to building codes
 - ◆ Building codes establish safety requirement for new building construction to include fire protection.
 - ◆ Sets the basic requirements for the type of construction, height, distance between firewalls and materials used.
 - ◆ Includes safe exits required.
 - ◆ Applies to all buildings, new or old.



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Fire Codes (4 of 9)

- Most communities adopt and enforce a full set of codes.
 - ◆ To include Building, Fire, Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing Codes and other local rules and regulations.
 - Generally includes regulations designed to prevent fires from occurring, to eliminate fire hazards, to protect lives, and to limit fire losses.



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Fire Codes (9 of 9)

- Regulations that prohibit parking in a fire lane or too close to a hydrant are usually found in the fire code.



3 Feet of Clearance



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Fire Codes (8 of 9)

- Fire Codes also include regulations for:
 - Dispensing flammable liquids.
 - Storing and storage containers.
 - Also limits storage in some buildings.





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Fire Codes (7 of 9)

- Limit the number of people who can be present in a public assembly occupancy.





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Inspection and Code Enforcement (3 of 3)

- Enforcement continued...
- ◆ Generally new firefighters are not required to enforce the code but many times are required to conduct inspections.



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Inspection and Code Enforcement (2 of 3)

- ◆ Responsible agency is usually named in the fire code.
- ◆ If violations are not corrected, a series of increasing penalties can be imposed, beginning with a verbal warning or a written notice to include:
 - ◆ Fine(s)
 - ◆ Revocation of license to operate
 - ◆ In some cases, a jail sentence can be imposed

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Inspection and Code Enforcement (1 of 3)

- Jurisdictions must be able to enforce the fire code(s) they adopt.
 - ◆ Citizens have a legal obligation to comply.
 - ◆ The adopted Code specifies the types of occupancies and frequency of inspections.
 - ◆ Regular inspections ensure compliance, note any violations, and require their corrections.

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Code Enforcement



■ In many communities, building inspectors or special code enforcement personnel are give the responsibility to enforce fire code.

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Fire Code

■ Fire codes usually specify the types of occupancies that can be inspected & the frequency of inspection.

- ◆ The agency responsible for performing inspections and enforcing codes may vary in different communities.
- ◆ Sometimes the Fire Department is responsible to inspect, exp; fire inspector.

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Fire Codes


See Texts and Handout

- ◆ California Fire Code (International Fire Code)
- ◆ California Building Code (International Bld. Code)
- ◆ California Code of Regulations Title 19
- ◆ NFPA
- ◆ International Fire Code
- ◆ Other related Texts...
- ◆ City Municipal Codes

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Private Dwellings (3 of 3)
 Note: The rights of having a private dwelling does not allow a citizen to do anything they want, for example:
 Storage of Hazardous Materials has other laws that could be violated, forcing the home owner to comply with the law.

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Private Dwellings (2 of 3)
 ◆ Voluntary inspections is called a home fore safety survey, and the legal requirements of the fire code are not applied.
 ◆ Voluntary inspections are an excellent way to educate citizens about the risks of fire.
 ◆ All firefighters should know how to conduct a home fire safety survey.

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Private Dwellings (1 of 3)
 ■ Fire Code does not apply to the interior of a private dwelling, and the fire department cannot require a homeowner to submit to an inspection.
 ◆ The owner or occupant can request a voluntary inspection to identify fire hazards, sometimes a service offered by different Fire Departments.

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Fire Safety Education (3 of 4)

- Most fire safety programs are presented to groups.
- School classes
- Scout troops
- Church groups
- Senior citizen groups
- Civic organizations
- Hospital staff
- Employees of different businesses



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Fire Safety Education (2 of 4)

- Fire safety education programs:
 - Learn Not to Burn®
 - Stop, Drop, and Roll
 - Change Your Clock—Change Your Battery
 - Fire safety for babysitters
 - Fire safety for seniors
 - Wildland fire prevention programs




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Fire Safety Education (1 of 4)

- Goal:
 - Making people aware of common fire risks and hazards and providing information about reducing or eliminating them can prevent many fires.
 - Also teaches techniques to reduce the risks of death or injury.

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Conducting a Fire Safety Survey in a Private Dwelling

■ Goal:

- ◆ Helps identify fire and life safety hazards and provides the homeowner or occupants with recommendations for a safer home.



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Fire Cause Determination

- Process of trying to establish the cause of a fire through careful investigation and analysis of available evidence.
- Finding causes of fires can help prevent similar fires from occurring.
- Important for both accidental and intentional fires.

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Fire Safety Education (4 of 4)

- Fire station tour is a common fire safety education activity.
- ◆ Enjoyed by both children and adults.
- ◆ Excellent opportunity to promote fire prevention.
- ◆ Every firefighter must understand how to conduct an effective fire station tour.

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Conducting a Fire Safety Survey in a Private Dwelling (3 of 3)

- In many (smaller) communities, the F.D. offers to check home smoke alarms and conduct home fire safety surveys at the same time.
- Some fire departments offer free smoke alarms while others will install the smoke alarm free of charge in any dwelling that does not already have one.

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Conducting a Fire Safety Survey in a Private Dwelling (2 of 3)

- A joint effort by the fire department and the homeowner or occupant:
 - ◆ Rule of thumb: homeowner accompanies you during the survey or inspection.
 - ◆ Point out hazards & explain reasons for making different recommendations.
 - ◆ Provide free educational materials.
 - ◆ Answer questions.

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Conducting a Fire Safety Survey in a Private Dwelling (1 of 3)


- May be announced on radio and/or TV, usually not done in Southern CA due to manpower issues.
- Cannot be conducted without the owner's or occupant's permission.
- A joint effort by the fire department and the homeowner or occupant.

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Getting Started (2 of 3)

- Concentrate on the hazard categories that most often cause residential fires.
- Cooking equipment
- Heating equipment
- Electrical wiring & appliance
- Smoking materials
- Candles and other open flames
- Children playing with fire

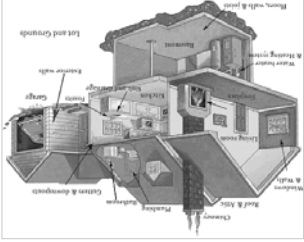


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Getting Started (1 of 3)

- Conduct the survey in a systematic fashion for both the inside and the outside of the home.



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Getting Started (1 of 3)

- Present a neat, professional image.
- Identify yourself.
- Inform the homeowner of the purpose.
- Remember that you are a guest, respect their privacy. You are there to teach how to protect their family & property.



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Getting Started (3 of 3)




- Look for fire protection equipment:
 - ◆ Ensure such equipment is properly installed, maintained and fully operational.
- If no fire extinguisher, recommend the appropriate type and location for it.

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Getting Started (2 of 3)



- Other hazards related to the age of the occupants.

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Getting Started (2 of 3)




- Some hazards encountered will depend on location and climate.
 - ◆ Wood burning stoves
 - ◆ Fireplaces (colder climates)

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Inside Hazards

- Explain potential fire risks and hazards.
- ◆ Example: Explain why overloaded electrical circuits are fire hazards.
- ◆ Your goal should be to educate the resident, not simply to point out fire hazards.



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Outside Hazards (2 of 2)

- Consider shrubs and vegetation that need to be trimmed or removed.
- Determine the condition of the mortar in the chimney.
- See if the chimney has been cleaned.




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Outside Hazards (1 of 2)

- Ensure the house number is clearly visible.
- Look for accumulated trash.
- Note any flammable materials.



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Smoke Alarm Tips (1 of 2)

- Should be installed in or near every bedroom.
- Should be mounted on ceiling or high on a wall.
- Should not be located near windows, exterior doors, or duct vents.
- Only qualified electricians should install or replace AC-powered alarms.

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Inside Hazards: Smoke Alarms

The presence of working smoke alarms on each level of a house reduces the risk of death from fire by 50%

- Verify and test all smoke alarms.
- Give residents a copy of NFPA fact sheet on smoke alarms.

(see handout)

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Inside Hazards

- Identify escape routes in case of fire.
 - ◆ Primary
 - ◆ Secondary
 - ◆ Meeting point
- Mention the importance of home fire exit drills involving all family members.


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Inside Hazards: Bedrooms

Most common causes of fires in bedrooms are:

- ◆ Defective wiring.
- ◆ Improper use of heating devices.
- ◆ Improper use of candles.
- ◆ Children playing with matches.
- ◆ Smoking in bed (note: Smoking in bed causes 5.4% of fires but 23% of fire deaths).




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Smoke Alarm Tips (2 of 2)

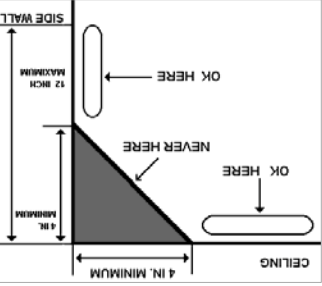
- Should be tested at least once a month by using the "test" button.
- Should be dusted and vacuumed regularly.
- Batteries should be replaced once a year (or daylight savings time).
- ◆ Or if you hear the "chirp" warning of low battery.



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Smoke Alarm Tips



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Inside Hazards: Kitchens

- Approved ABC-rated fire extinguisher should be in the kitchen.



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Inside Hazards: Kitchens

- Look for signs of frayed wires on appliances, flammable towels or potholders close to the stove and flammable cooking oils stored near the stove.
- Nothing that can ignite, such as plastic food container or paper packaging should ever be placed on cooking surfaces, even if the burner is turned off.

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Inside Hazards: Kitchens

- Kitchen fires 22% of residential fires are often caused by leaving cooking food on the stove unattended and by faulty electric appliances.



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Inside Hazards: Garages, Basements, and Storage Areas

- Gasoline and other flammable substances should be stored only in approved containers.
- Propane tanks, for gas grills should be kept outside buildings.
- Other small quantity flammables; paint, varnish, thinners etc... stored in metal containers away from heat.

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Inside Hazards: Garages, Basements, and Storage Areas

- Explain the importance of good housekeeping and the need to clear accumulated junk.
- Furnaces and hot water heaters that operate with an open flame are often located in a basement or garage.
- ◆ Can be a ignition source.

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Inside Hazards: Living Rooms

- Primary causes of fires in living rooms, family rooms or entertainment rooms are smoking and electrical equipment.
- Look for overloaded electrical equipment.
- If room contains a fireplace or wood stove, ensure that no flammable or easily ignited materials are stored nearby.
- ◆ Fire place has a spark screen and is cleaned annually.

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Closing Review (2 of 2)

- File your report according to the standard operating procedures (SOP's) of your department.
- Identify hazards that require further action or follow-up.

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Closing Review (1 of 2)

- Listen carefully to any questions from the homeowner or occupant.
- Complete the inspection form and give a copy to the family.
- Review the findings and describe the steps that need to be taken.
- Talk to the entire family.
- Emphasize the importance of smoke alarms, home exit plans, and fire drills.

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Inside Hazards: Garages, Basements, and Storage Areas


- Fully-charged fire extinguisher is recommended.


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Conducting Fire Station Tours (3 of 6)

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- Teach young people what to do if their clothes catch fire, how to call 9-1-1, the importance of home fire drills, and the dangers of playing with matches.

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Conducting Fire Station Tours (2 of 6)

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- Young children like to see action.

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Conducting Fire Station Tours (1 of 6)


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- Present a unique opportunity.
- Remember that you will represent your department.
- In your welcome, tell the visitors what they should do if the station receives an alarm.
- The tour format will vary depending on the age and interests of the group.

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Conducting Fire Station Tours (6 of 6)



- Adults are probably more interested in home fire safety.
- Senior citizens are often more interested in the EMS services available.
- Leave every tour group with both a message and materials.

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Conducting Fire Station Tours (5 of 6)



- ◆ Some teenagers might be interested in becoming firefighter or joining a fire academy or explorer group.

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Conducting Fire Station Tours (4 of 6)

- Teenagers are ready for lessons that they can apply in everyday life.
- ◆ Teenager work as babysitters, prevention messages geared toward cooking safety & evacuation of children are appropriate.
- ◆ Teens are high-risk group for motor vehicle collisions, so messages on safe driving, drunk driving & what to do if you see an emergency are of interest.

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Summary

- Fire prevention includes a range of activities.
- A home fire safety survey helps identify fire and life safety hazards.
- Fire station tours present a unique opportunity to help people learn.

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