

## FAQ: Smoking Safety

### **How many fires and fire-related deaths are caused by smoking?**

Smoking-material fires are the leading cause of fire deaths and the fourth leading cause of fire injuries. In campus-related fires, smoking is one of the common factors in fatal fires.

<http://www.nfpa.org/assets/files/PDF/SmokingSummary.pdf>

### **I don't smoke so I'm OK when it comes to fires, right?**

One in four people killed in a fire started by smoking materials was not the smoker who started the fire.

<http://www.nfpa.org/assets/files/PDF/SmokingSummary.pdf>

### **How can you help prevent a smoking related fire?**

Don't smoke if you are tired, taking medication or have been drinking alcohol. It is very easy to fall asleep with a cigarette still burning.

Don't leave lit cigarettes, cigars, or pipes unattended – they can easily fall over as they burn down, land on a carpet or newspaper and start a fire. When you put it out, make sure it really is out. Use a proper, heavy ashtray which can't tip over easily and is made of a material that won't burn. Don't improvise.

### **Do fires caused by smoking materials kill students?**

A number of fatal fires have started after a party where people have been smoking. The cigarette rolls down into the cushions on a couch or chair. The cigarette can smolder for hours and then burst into flames after everyone has gone to bed. This includes the couches found on porches where a number of fatal fires have started in the middle of the night.

### **What can I do to prevent fires caused by smoking materials?**

Many of these fires start after parties, so keep your party safe with these simple steps:

- After a party, check the furniture cushions for cigarettes
- Empty the trash and take it outside, away from the house. Why? Because people throw cigarettes into the trash before they are really out.

### **What about smoke alarms?**

So often in fatal fires the smoke alarm has been disabled, torn down, or is missing batteries. Always have a working smoke alarm. It can save your life, but only if it is working.

### **When do fatal fires generally occur?**

The majority occur at night, when everyone is asleep.

<http://www.nfpa.org/assets/files/PDF/HomesExecSum.pdf>

### **Won't the fire or smoke wake me up?**

So often, the answer is "no," especially if people have been drinking alcohol.

**Does drinking have that big an impact?**

Yes. Did you know that you lose most of your ability to wake up to a smoke alarm after the equivalent of just one beer? Studies involving sleeping students measured their ability to react to a smoke alarm after consuming increasing levels of alcohol. It took much louder smoke alarms to alert them after just one drink.

[http://www.nfpa.org/assets/files//PDF/Proceedings/Smoke\\_Alarm\\_Notification\\_of\\_Sleeping\\_People\\_Progress\\_Report-.pdf](http://www.nfpa.org/assets/files//PDF/Proceedings/Smoke_Alarm_Notification_of_Sleeping_People_Progress_Report-.pdf)