

HOUSING AND WELLNESS PROGRAM


# A Comprehensive Wellness Guide for **Healthy Homes**

## **FIRE SAFETY**



First Nations Housing  
Professionals Association

L'Association des professionnels de  
l'habitation des Premières Nations

A close-up, profile view of a brown bear's head. The bear's fur is thick and brown, with some lighter patches. Its eye is visible, looking towards the right. The snout is prominent, with a large, dark nose. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue-grey color.

## Home

Prioritizing the wellness of the home is key to creating safe and supportive space for individuals and families. A home is more than just a physical space; it's a place of comfort, security, and belonging.

Creating a guide focused on supporting the wellness of the home is essential for promoting the overall well-being of its occupants. This guide offers practical tips and resources to strengthen various aspects of home wellness. By supporting the health of our homes, we also promote the physical and mental well-being of everyone who lives there.

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## Acknowledgement

The **First Nations Housing Professionals Association (FNHPA)** is delighted to introduce the Housing and Wellness Program, aimed at offering crucial information and guidance to First Nations individuals residing on reserve or engaged in housing-related roles. This initiative delivers educational programs, tools, and resources tailored for First Nations housing staff, residents, and youth. Through the implementation of this program, our aim is to address housing, health, and safety concerns holistically.



# FIRE SAFETY

Fire safety is an important part of maintaining a safe and healthy home. Fires can start quickly and spread rapidly, but many risks can be reduced through awareness, safe habits, and regular checks. Practicing fire safety helps protect your home, your belongings, and the people who live in it, supporting overall well-being and peace of mind.

***Disclaimer:** This guide provides general information intended to support home wellness, safety, and well-being. Each First Nation may have its own housing policies, programs, bylaws, and community guidelines. Please refer to local policies and community resources for the specific rules, responsibilities, and supports that apply to your home.*

## Fire Safety Risks and Prevention Tips

Fire risks are often linked to everyday activities in the home, such as cooking, heating, and using electrical appliances. Small actions, like leaving cooking unattended or using damaged equipment, can increase the risk of fire. Practicing safe habits and checking your home regularly can help prevent fires and reduce potential harm.

### Smoke alarms

Install smoke alarms on every level of your home and in all bedrooms. Test them monthly and replace batteries at least once a year.

### Cooking safety

Never leave cooking unattended. Grease buildup, hot oil, and flammable items near the stove are common causes of kitchen fires.

### Heating appliances

Keep space heaters, furnaces, and fireplaces clear of flammable materials, and maintain them regularly.

### Electrical safety

Avoid overloading outlets and using damaged cords. Unplug appliances when not in use.

### Candle safety

Never leave candles unattended and keep them away from flammable objects.

### Children and fire hazards

Store matches, lighters, and other fire hazards safely and out of reach of children.

### Dryer maintenance

Clean lint traps after each use and regularly clean dryer vents to reduce fire risk.

### Flammable liquids

Store gasoline, solvents, and similar materials in sealed containers away from heat sources.

### Appliance maintenance

Check appliances for signs of damage, unusual noises, or overheating. Repair or replace faulty appliances promptly.

### Seasonal items

Use extra caution with barbecues, fire pits, and holiday decorations. Keep them away from buildings, avoid overloading outlets, and turn items off when not in use.

### Fire-resistant materials

Consider fire-resistant curtains, bedding, and furniture to help slow the spread of fire.

### Stay informed

Follow fire safety regulations and recommendations from local fire departments and authorities.

### Evacuation plan

Develop and practice a fire escape plan with all household members. Identify two exits from each room and choose a safe meeting place outside.



## Emergency Planning

Planning ahead can save lives during a house fire. Use the steps below to create an emergency plan for your household:

### Install smoke alarms

- Ensure smoke alarms are installed on every level of your home and in all bedrooms. Test them regularly.

### Create a fire evacuation plan

- Sketch a floor plan of your home, marking all possible exits from each room, including doors and windows.
- Identify two ways out of every room, if possible. Choose a safe meeting place outside (e.g., a neighbour's home).
- Practice your fire escape plan regularly with all household members, including children and pets.

### Establish responsibilities

- Assign specific roles to household members during a fire.
- For example, designate someone to assist children or Elders, someone to call emergency services, and someone to gather essential items (only if safe to do so).

### Teach fire safety

- Educate all household members about fire risks and safe behaviours.
- Emphasize staying low to the ground in smoke and checking doors for heat before opening them.

### Practice fire safety behaviours

- Emphasize the importance of getting out of the home quickly and calling for help. Remind household members not to delay by gathering belongings during a fire.
- Encourage everyone to exit the home as quickly as possible.

### “Stay low and go”

- Teach everyone to crawl low under smoke, as cleaner air is closer to the ground.



### Emergency contacts

- Keep a list of emergency numbers, including the fire department, police, and poison control, in a visible location.
- Make sure everyone knows how to call emergency services.

### Practice fire extinguisher use

- If you have fire extinguishers, ensure household members know how to use them.
- Practice using them safely in an appropriate environment.

### Stay calm and rehearse

- Encourage everyone to remain calm during an emergency.
- Practice the fire escape plan regularly so everyone knows what to do without panicking.

### Review and update the plan

- Review and update your fire escape plan regularly, especially if there are changes to your home layout or household members.

# Fire Safety Equipment

To help keep your home safe from fire, make sure you have the following essential safety equipment:

## Smoke alarms

Install on every level of your home and in all bedrooms. Test them regularly.

## Fire extinguisher

Keep at least one in your home. Make sure it is easily accessible and that household members know how to use it.

## Fire blanket

Store in or near the kitchen to help smother small fires, especially those involving cooking oils or grease.

## Escape ladders

For multi-level homes, keep escape ladders near windows to provide a safe exit if main routes are blocked.

## Flashlights

Keep battery-powered flashlights or lanterns in accessible locations in case of power outages or emergencies. Check batteries regularly.

## First aid kit

Keep a stocked kit available to treat minor injuries.

## Carbon monoxide detectors

Install near sleeping areas and on every level of your home to detect this odourless, colourless gas.

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# Electrical Safety

Here are some practical tips to help prevent electrical hazards and reduce the risk of fire:

## Cords and plugs

Check regularly for frayed wires, cracks, or exposed parts. Replace damaged cords immediately.

## Outlet use

Avoid plugging in too many devices, which can cause overheating and increase fire risk. Use power strips with built-in circuit breakers when needed. Never insert objects into outlets. Use outlet covers if children are present.

## Extension cords

Use the right type of cord for the task and avoid running cords under rugs or furniture.

## Electrical panels

Make sure the panel is properly sized to handle increased electrical demand, especially during renovations or upgrades.

## Water and electricity

Keep electrical devices away from sinks, bathtubs, pools, and wet hands.

## Unused appliances

Unplug chargers and small appliances when not in use.

## Report and address issues promptly

Burning smells, sparks, buzzing, or flickering outlets should be checked by a qualified professional.

## Appliance use

Follow manufacturer instructions when using electrical devices.

## Be cautious around downed lines

If you see a downed power line, stay far away and call emergency services. Do not touch anything the line may be in contact with, such as fences or trees.



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