

Smoking Safety Taken Outside

Smoke Free environments can go up in smoke if you do not practice fire safety.

Many business and private homes are becoming smoke free and many employees, home owners, and even their house guests are moving outside to smoke cigarettes. With the migration of smokers from the inside to the outside there are new cigarette safety tips everyone should know.

Fires caused by discarding cigarettes carelessly outside are on the rise. Fires that start on the outside of businesses and homes are on the increase. Cigarettes that are carelessly thrown to the ground are starting the exteriors of the structures on fire when they roll under or next to the outside walls. A cigarette can burn to temperatures up to 700 degrees and a cigarette can smolder under or next to a structure for hours before a fire starts. These types of fires may not start until after a business is closed or people have gone to sleep in their homes. Because the fire starts in-between the walls or on the outside of a structure, smoke detectors cannot detect the fire until the smoke and heat have made their way into the structure. A fire on the outside of a building can be undetected for an extended amount of time.

Structure fires are not the only danger related to people smoking outdoors. Grass, wild land fires, and fires along roadways can be caused by drivers attempting to have a smoke free vehicle by hanging their cigarettes out of the windows or drivers who are just simply being careless smokers. Any fire involving brush, wooded areas, grass, leaves, and other organic materials can threaten homes, business, people, and wildlife. Even areas that appear to be green can hide years of dry underbrush beneath them. Hundreds of fires are started every year from cigarettes lost by mistake or thrown from people's vehicles.

The best way to combat these types of fires is to prevent them.

Here are some simple tips help you prevent cigarette fires:

- **Always provide enough sturdy, fire and weather proof, non-tipping, outdoor ash trays for employees and house guests. Metal coffee cans filled with sand and have holes punched in the bottom for drainage is all you may need.**
- **Make sure your outdoor smoking area does not slope towards any structure.**
- **Do not toss cigarettes out of any vehicle that you are driving at any time or anywhere. It is a fire hazard and it is also littering.**
- **Never toss a cigarette into landscaping, yards, drains, on decks, or on driveways and roadways.**
- **If you smoke cigarettes responsibly and always discard them in fire safe receptacle then you can prevent fires.**