



FACT SHEET 3

STORED ENERGY IN FUELS

Fire safety at home

The Kitchen

The single biggest cause of fire in the kitchen, is overheated oil or fat.

Ask learners: what can we do to prevent fires in the kitchen?

Answers could include the following:

- Do not leave cooking unattended.
- If you leave, turn the heat off first.
- Use a timer on a cooker to remind you when the food is ready.
- Make sure you have a fire extinguisher or a bucket filled with sand in the kitchen.
- If possible, make sure you have a heat or smoke detector in your home that will warn you if there is a fire or smoke in your house or school.
- When using paraffin or gas stoves or when cooking on open fires always make sure that the stove is situated where small children cannot reach it and you must have sand nearby and in the case of an open fire, water should be nearby.



Candles

Candles have become a necessity in every home, even if there is electricity available. Candles are, nowadays, promoted as a lifestyle necessity, to improve the atmosphere and mood of a place.

- Always use a proper candlestick.
- Place the candle on a non-flammable surface.
- Do not stick a candle to a saucer with dripping wax.
- Place candles well away from anything that can catch fire, such as curtains, clothing, bedding, hair, etc.
- Keep candles out of draughts.
- Keep candle out of reach of children and pets.
- Do not leave a candle in a room which is unoccupied.
- Avoid moving a candle while it is alight.
- Ensure all candles are extinguished before you go to bed.



Gas

- Make sure the valve is turned off before changing a cylinder.
- Change cylinders in the open air where possible. Otherwise open doors and windows to provide ventilation.
- Store spare cylinders outside, protected from frost, sunlight and thieves or people damaging it.
- When you have finished using an appliance, make sure that the valve is closed properly, with no leakages.
- Make certain that fire extinguishers are regularly checked and that an escape route is available.
- Make certain that emergency numbers are readily available at the telephone.
[PORT ELIZABETH: Fire Department – 041 585 1555; Ambulance – 10177 and Police – 10111.



General Fire Safety Tips

Many children will try to hide from a fire, often in a closet, under a bed, or in a corner. Those who know basic fire facts, will be able to protect themselves better. Teach your learners that fires spread quickly, that most fire-related deaths are not from burns but from smoke inhalation and that dangerous fumes can overcome a person in just a few minutes.

Children should learn to:

- cover their mouths and noses with a **moist towel** or an article of clothing to keep out dangerous fumes while evacuating
- crawl **under** the smoke to safety, staying as low to the ground as possible (smoke always rises)
- touch any door (not the doorknob) to see if it is hot, and if it is, do **not** open it — find another exit
- locate the nearest stairway marked "Fire Exit" if they live in an apartment building, or a fire escape if the stairway is not accessible — kids should know to always avoid elevators during a fire
- never stop to take personal belongings or pets or to make a phone call while evacuating
- **never** go back into a burning building once safely outside
- **Stop, drop, and roll** to extinguish flames if an article of clothing catches on fire