

# Home Safety Guide

## GENERAL/WHOLE HOUSE:

### ■ Electrical Safety

- Do not place cords where they can be a tripping hazard
- Never place cords under rugs or carpets
- Do not drape cords over space heaters, radiators, or other hot surfaces
- Avoid using extension cords
- Use safety plugs to cover unused electrical outlets
- Never overload extension cords or power strips

### ■ Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors

- Have an operating smoke/fire/carbon monoxide (CO) detector on each floor
- Check the batteries monthly and change them every six months (choose memorable dates such as holidays or birthdays)
- If anyone in your home is hearing impaired, be sure that your smoke detector alerts using lights or vibrations

### ■ Fire Safety

- Have ABC-rated fire extinguishers on every floor on the house; be sure there is one in or near the kitchen
- Be sure everyone in the house knows the location and proper operation of fire extinguishers
- Never leave a space heater, halogen lamp, or open flame unattended; do not keep any of these items close to curtains or other flammable materials
- Make sure that all lamps and fixtures are equipped with light bulbs having wattage equal to or less than the manufacturer's suggestion
- Have a plan for escape in case of fire; be sure you practice it

### ■ General Safety

- Keep important phone numbers – including police, fire, poison control, and ambulance – near the telephone; be sure to write in large, easy-to-read print
- Be sure you have sturdy step stools and ladders; do not use chairs to reach high places
- Be careful when removing paint, tiles, and floorboard; there is extreme risk in older homes of exposure to lead, asbestos, or mold

## KITCHEN:

### Kitchen

- Store flammable items away from the range
  - do not place rags/towels on the oven handle
  - store plastic utensils and pot holders away from hot surfaces
- Do not wear loose fitting clothing while cooking
- Keep baking soda on hand to extinguish stovetop grease fires
- Turn pot handles away from the front of the stove
- Unplug all portable and countertop appliances that are not in use
- Keep all appliance cords away from sink and stove areas
- Make sure the kitchen is well-lighted
- Clean all spills immediately to avoid slips and the spread of bacteria
- Separate cleaning products and other chemicals from food and drinks
- Keep anything poisonous out of the reach of children

## LIVING ROOM/FAMILY ROOM/DEN:

### Living Area

- Be sure the chimney and flue are clear and cleaned, or at least inspected, at least once a year
- Keep low coffee tables, magazine racks, footrests, and plants out of walkways
- Remove throw rugs or place double-stick tape on the bottom of all rugs and carpets to prevent tripping

## HALLS AND ENTRYWAYS:

### Entryways

- Make sure that all doors to the outside shut securely and have a lock
- Keep keys to internal door locks close to the door and easily accessible
- Keep hallways clear for easy passage in the case of an emergency
- Place locks where all members of the household can reach and operate them
- Be sure the walkway to the house is clear of tripping hazards
- Confirm that all doorways can accommodate household members with walkers or wheelchairs

## STAIRS:

### Stairs

- Stairs should be well-lighted with switches at both the top and bottom
- Nothing should be stored on the steps – even temporarily
- Do not place loose area rugs at the top or bottom of the stairs
- Place handrails on both sides of stairs

## BATHROOMS:

### Bedroom/Bathroom

- Keep electronic products away from bathtubs and sinks
- Keep towels and washcloths away from heaters
- Install non-slip mats or textured adhesive strips on the floors of your shower and bathtub
- Keep first aid supplies well-stocked and easily accessible
- Set your hot water heater no hotter than 120 degrees Fahrenheit
- Install grab bars in bath areas

## BEDROOMS:

### Laundry

- Have a lamp or light switch with dimmer feature you can reach from bed
- Place nightlights in bedrooms and hallways to guide you in the dark
- Refrain from smoking in bed
- Keep hot plates, space heaters, and other hot appliances away from the bed
- Keep a phone near the bed
- Never place anything on top of a plugged-in electric blanket

## BASEMENT/LAUNDRY ROOM:

- Clean the dryer's lint trap after each use
- Never run the dryer when no one is home
- Do not leave clutter on the ground; it is both a fire and tripping hazard

*This brochure has been adapted from materials originally produced by The American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, The Consumer Product Safety Commission, Home Safety Council, and Underwriters Laboratories.*

## WHO WE ARE

**Rebuilding Together** is the nation's leading non-profit working to preserve affordable homeownership by providing **no-cost home repairs and modifications** to low-income homeowners. The national organization is made up of over 200 affiliates across the country, including 9 in Washington.



## OUR PROGRAMS

Each affiliate of Rebuilding Together has its own programs, so contact your local affiliate to learn more. Many affiliates have programs related to repairs and modifications like these:

**Rebuilding Day** is an annual event which takes place on the last Saturday in April. On this day, teams of volunteers come together to complete various needed home repairs for low-income homeowners. Nationally, Rebuilding Together completes 10,000 home repairs a year on National Rebuilding Day with a market value of \$100 million!

**Home Modification** intends to make homes more accessible to people with limited mobility. Modifications include installing and repairing ramps, stairs, grab bars, walk-in showers, and other adaptations to make a home safer for an elderly person or a person with disabilities.

## WHO WE HELP

All of our services are provided at no cost to the homeowner. Contact your local affiliate for specific qualifications. Many affiliates require that you must:

- ✓ Own your home
- ✓ Be low-income (ask for specific income requirements)
- ✓ Be elderly, a person with disabilities, or a family with children

## CONTACT US

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**PACIFIC COUNTY** **360-642-3634**

**SEATTLE** **206.682.1231**  
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**SOUTH SOUND (Pierce County)** **253.722.5850**  
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**SPOKANE** **509.777.0888**

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**WENATCHEE** **509.782.1028**

