

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 Area

LIVING ROOM/FAMILY ROOM/DEN:

- 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. **Rebuilding Together South Sound** was formed in 2001 by two community members. To date, we have completed repairs totaling \$3 million in market value.



OUR PROGRAMS

Rebuilding Day is our 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. We have grown from completing 3 projects on our first Rebuilding Day in 2002 to more than 50 projects for Rebuilding Day 2008!

Home Modification is our year-round program intended to make homes more accessible to people with limited mobility. We install and repair ramps, stairs, grab bars, walk-in showers, and other adaptations to make a home safer for an elderly person or a person with disabilities.

OUR MISSION

To bring volunteers and communities together to improve the homes and lives of low-income homeowners.

"Please know that you have not just changed our lives with your generous gift, but you have changed our community. You made our home a better and safer place to live - a place we can be proud to call home."

- John and Felicia, homeowners

WHO WE HELP

All of our services are provided at no cost to the homeowner. To qualify for services from Rebuilding Together South Sound, you must:

- ✓ Live in Pierce County, Federal Way or Auburn
- ✓ Own your own home
- ✓ Be low-income (please contact us for specific income requirements)
- ✓ Be elderly, a person with disabilities, or a family with children



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www.rebuildingtogetherss.org

