

OCTOBER 16, 2024

SALUTE TO FIRE FIGHTERS

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The Crete News

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The Friend Sentinel

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The Wilber Republican

Prevent home electrical fires

A person's home should be a safe haven. Too often, however, there may be dangers lurking in a home that can compromise the safety of residents.

Electrical fires are no joke. The Hartford insurance company says electrical failure or malfunctions account for almost 34,000 home fires per year. The National Fire Protection Association says they can contribute to 440 deaths and \$1.3 billion in direct property damage annually.

Older homes may be most vulnerable to electrical fires, as such structures were not designed to handle the demands of modern living. The insurance experts at Nationwide say half of all homes in the United States have electrical systems that were installed before garage door openers, high-tech coffee makers, and many computers became must-have items. And the Electrical Safety Foundation International says homes built before

1973 with overloaded electrical systems pose a number of safety threats.

Overloaded circuits are not the only contributor to electrical fires. Damaged wiring characterized by worn, frayed or loose wires can cause fires. Malfunctioning appliances or those improperly maintained also can create home fires. Another contributor is poorly installed extension cords and power strips, as well as faulty outlets and switches around homes.

Homeowners can take various steps to reduce the risk of electrical fires at home.

- Install arc fault circuit interrupters. AFCIs are special types of circuit breakers that help prevent fires caused by nicked or frayed wiring. An AFCI gets tripped and cuts off power when an electrical problem is detected before a fire can start. In 2022, the National Electric Code started requiring AFCIs in bedrooms, and by 2017 they have been

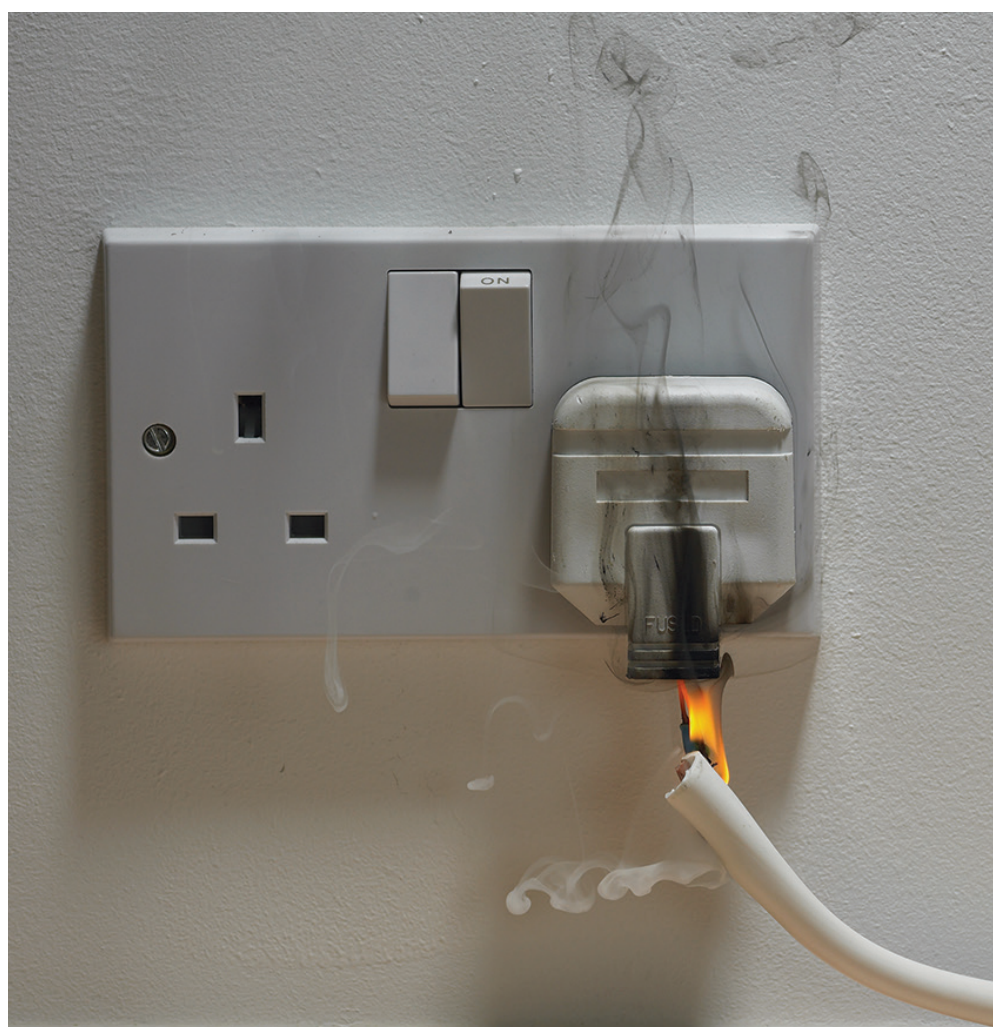
mandated throughout homes.

- Conduct a home electrical inspection. All homes more than 40 years old should be inspected to ensure their electrical systems can handle modern demands, says Nationwide. A qualified electrician can make recommendations regarding replacing breakers and suggest other modifications to improve safety.

- Utilize a monitor. Ting from Whisker Labs monitors a home's electrical network using a smart plug-in sensor that is designed to detect hazards. The company indicates micro-arcs and sparks that develop are precursors to electrical fires.

- Turn to automatic shut-offs. Homeowners can utilize appliances and additional devices that automatically shut off after a set period of time. This can reduce the risk of overheating.

- Rely on timers or smart devices. Timers and smart home devices can give homeowners



control of electrical components like appliances or lights from a remote area. This enables users to turn an appliance on or off to reduce overheating or avoid additional risk factors for electrical

fires.

- Don't go DIY. Choosing to work with a professional electrician rather than doing electrical work oneself can help reduce electrical fire risk considerably. Electricians know

how to work on electrical systems safely to prevent damage to wires and components, and also safeguard themselves against shock.

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Crete Volunteer Fire Department

Front row (left to right): Tod Allen, Rod Kuss, Tiffany Carnahan, Mel Clouse, Elayne Woods, Phillip Oelschlager, Gordon Bridges, Marvin Barlow and Landon Chao; Second row (left to right): AJ Page, Donavin Viger, Harrison Gaman, Elijah Clarke, Hayden Peterson, Nikki Wells, Abbie Willett, Courtney Marcelino, Ethan Henrichs and Dakota Page; and Back Row (left to right): Matt Bakker, Carlos Mayo, Luke Knoke, Will Dehart, Kaidan Smith, Shane Parker, Hayden DeBoer, Steph Yost, Karson Cowan, Dalton Steelman, Jordan Kwiatkowski and Brad Elder. Not pictured: James Yost, Bfrandon Smejdir, Andrew Allen, Tim McLaughlin, Preston Zvolanek, Ned Goertzen, Gene Garza, Henry Vicente-Perez, Jeff Downs, Tonja Vyhnalek, Cody Williamson and Matt Gross.

AMY HAUSMAN



Clatonia Volunteer Fire Department

Members of the Clatonia Volunteer Fire Department are, from left: (front row) Brady Fuller, Jon Strunk, Laura Niles, Justin Haack, Riley Haack, Shane Cline and Matt Niemeyer; and (back row) Pat Derickson, Max Latshaw, Josh Niles, Ian McDougall, Karel Polacek, Jason Siems, Jessie Hajek and John Kaiser.

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Thank you to all the brave men and women serving in our local fire departments!



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DeWitt Volunteer Fire Department

Members of the DeWitt Volunteer Fire Department are, from left: (front row) Kerri Thornburg, Kristi Rahe, Brittany Murray, Tim Garrison, Shawn Weise and Sam Kirchoff; and (back row) Jackson Kirchoff, Dale Seachord, Lyle Fink, Kyle Pohlmann, Brad Gronenthal, Eugene Shores and Doug Stokebrand.

DOUG CARROLL



Dorchester Volunteer Fire Department

Members of the Dorchester Volunteer Fire Department are, from left: (front row) Aaron Edinger, Cory Schleuter, Jacob Railsback, Hannah Railsback, James Bond, Todd Axline, Rebecca Steuk and Andrew Pracheil; and (back row) Jesse Daws, Brant Pracheil, Jerad Fuller, Justin Cecrle, Marcus Kastanek, Tim Stehlik, Matt Steuk and Brent Kasl. Travis Fuller is not pictured.

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Exeter Volunteer Fire Department

Exeter Volunteer Fire Department members gather in front of the new attack truck. They are, from left: (front row) Adam Chrans, Lisa Ring, Hope Strate, Vicki Androyna, Dan Everhart, Joe Miller, Jackie Miller, Shari Michl, Starlene Benorden, Derek Axline, Richard Erdkamp and Doug Papik; and (back row) John Graham, Tim Wilbeck, Terry Salyer, Ken Strate, John Mueller, Dylan Ring, Jameson Trauger, Sean Gibson, Alan Michl, Lane Strate, Dylan Axline and Mark Beethe.

LEESA K. BARTU/



Friend Volunteer Fire Department

Front row (left to right): Tim Paulsen, Ben Paulsen, Logan Milton, Stan Krause, Kevin Spicka, Sara Thomsen, Eric Bardell and Jake Clouse; Back row (left to right): Austin Rohrig, Gary Rohrig, Darren Thompson, Eldon Elkund Jr., John Cruz, Holly Kohout, Jewels Knoke, Seth Knoke, Dalton Brandt and Brad Ricenbaw. Not pictured: Brent Milton, Rick Ricenbaw, Tony Ryan, Ray Rohrig, Bob Milton, Kelly Paulsen, Allen Bruntz, Jarod Vossler, Charles Slama, John Clouse, Josh Nickel, Blake Due, Graham Stutzman, Emmett Beckler and Graig Salnick.

AMY HAUSMAN/



Plymouth Volunteer Fire Department

Members of the Plymouth Fire and Rescue Dept. include, from left, (front row) Chad Weichel, Gavin Hahn, Jeremy Connelly, Greg Schultis, Taylor Koch, Kristin Lange, Bryan Paxton; and (back row) Shane Vorderstrasse, Barry Weichel, Alan Gronemeyer, Anna Gronenthal, Jim Earnhart, Greg Meints, Justin Weichel, Bryson Kenworthy, Brad Eisenhauer, Dave Schmidt, Randy Ebke, Noah Fuller, Lee Nickel, Brian Schwisow, Evan Brandt, Kaleb Nickel, Reegon Witt, Gary Vorderstrasse, Matt Umland, Mason Schmidt and Chris Mammen. Not pictured are Tim Garrison, Andy Kreikemeier, Alex Paxton, Brett Scheiding and Jon Zulauf.

COURTESY PHOTO

Thank you for your service!

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Swanton Volunteer Fire Department

Members of the Swanton Volunteer Fire Department include, from left: (front row) Justin Pribyl, Tim Likens, Tom Bass, Larry Barta, Jared Deke and Bob Homolka; and (back row) Alan Strouf, Dennis Bessler, Gary Jiskra, Gary Barta, Eric Byers, Travis Likens and Lynn Strouf. Not pictured are Lonnie Karl, Jim Vales, Austin Nicholson, Jim Toof and Cory Parks.

DOUG CARROLL



Tobias Volunteer Fire Department

Members of the Tobias Volunteer Fire Department include, from left: (front row) Gary Baxa, Lonnie Schafer, Casey Hansen and Larry Schafer; and (back row) Dakota Orf, Dan Bartels, Kolby Schafer, Brayden Rut and Drew Niederklein. Not pictured are Brandon Bartels, Shane Roesler, Scott Sobotka, Jaicee Sobotka, Hailey Schafer, Allen Lintz, Matt Maas and Nick Maas.

DOUG CARROLL



Milligan Volunteer Fire Department

Left to right, back row: Steve Havel, Justin White, Gabe Jaeger, Garrett Hafer, Jeff Spiels, Zack Kroll and Dillon Steinacher. Front row: Michael Nadherny, Brian Nadherny, Dan Kotas, Larry Michl, Dennis Kotas, John Kassik Not Pictured: Tyler Williams, Alex Uldrich, Kyle Svec, Scott Oliva, Doug Kotas, Mike Kassik, Dean Kassik, Wally Fogel, Bruce Filipi, Steve Briske

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Western Volunteer Fire Department

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Members of the Western Volunteer Fire Department in 2024 include, from left: (seated) Scott Theis, Henry Orf, Todd Schelbitzki, Andy Schoenbeck and Mark Kratochvil; and (standing) Rodd Paul, Bryan Kotas, Mike Homolka, Bill Schwisow, Colby Krueger and Alexx Henk. Not pictured are Bob Button, Kevin Homolka, Seth Keller, Kaleb Kotas, Kent Musil, Frank Meyers, Dwight Nickel, Rod Nickel, Alan Orf, Justin Rezebek, Kelli Schoenbeck, Brad Schwisow, Jeff Stewart, Colby Walker, Jarrod Zoubek and Zack Keller.



Wilber Volunteer Fire Department

KEATON BURGESS

Members of the Wilber Volunteer Fire Department include, from left: (front row) Chief Scott Havel, Will Togstad, Brad Schuerman, Derek Filipi, Jerrod Zoubek, Dennis Baber and James Doiel; and (back row) Loren Coffey, Tyler Havel, Tonja Vyhnalek, Craig Vyhnalek and Trevor Kvasnicka. Not pictured are Dustin Burns, Chris Cerveny, Matt Gross, Lucas Havel, Randy Homolka, Chan Hoover, Kaleb Kotas, Pat Meister, Baylee Mulbery, Justin Nickel, Matt Petracek, Tom Petracek, Coltin Rezabek, Ann Roesler, Marvin Sasek, Andrew Seyfert, Nathan Thompson, Cody Williamson and David Zimmerman.

Thank you

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