

Fire Prevention – Job Sites

Portable Fire Extinguishers

Each construction site should be equipped with an adequate complement of portable fire extinguishers. Pressurized water extinguishers are effective for normal combustibles (Class A). Since construction activity, however, usually involves flammable liquids and electrical wiring hazards, the use of multipurpose ABC, dry chemical extinguishers is recommended. nationally recognized testing laboratory should be used.

Fire Alarm Installation

Smoke and heat detection systems provide early warning in a fire situation and, when centrally monitored, execute the immediate dispatching of fire fighting equipment. The majority of new homes include burglar alarm systems in the contract price. Heat and smoke detectors are easily integrated into the circuitry of the system. To achieve optimum benefit during construction, the alarm companies should be encouraged to pre-wire the home soon after framing and install several temporary heat and/or smoke detectors.

Temporary Heat

Portable heaters are used extensively in the construction industry to permit work to continue during cold weather. Many serious fire losses have been caused by portable heaters which are carelessly positioned or which lack adequate safeguards. The use of these devices can be minimized by installing the home's furnace in the initial stages of framing. As an added benefit, the heating system can provide even, uniform curing in the home, especially during drywalling and finishing. When the early hanging of the furnace is impractical and the use of portable heaters necessary, the following safeguards should be observed:

- The use of old wood burning "salamander" heaters should be strictly prohibited.
- Approved type heaters may be fueled by oil, natural gas, or LPG. Gasoline should never be used as a heater fuel.
- Positioning of the heater is critical. Units should never be placed near or around combustible material. An adequate distance, or clearance should always be maintained.
- Heaters using LPG should be placed at least six feet away from the supply cylinder.
- Automatic shut-off controls should be provided to interrupt fuel supply in the event of accidental flame failure, or if unit is tipped over.

Many serious fire losses have been caused by portable heaters which are carelessly positioned or which lack adequate safeguards.