

Volusia County Fire Services Safety Gram

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Hurricane Scene Safety

Fire Related Hazards Present During and After a Tornado or Hurricane

- Leaking gas lines, damaged or leaking gas propane containers and leaking vehicle gas tanks may explode or ignite.
- Debris can easily ignite, especially if electrical wires are severed.
- Pools of water and even appliances can be electrically charged.
- Generators are often used during power outages. Generators that are not properly used and maintained can be very hazardous.
- Alternative heating devices used incorrectly create fire hazards.
- Proper use and maintenance can decrease the possibility of a fire.
- Appliances that emit smoke or sparks should be repaired or replaced.

Chemical Safety

- Look for combustible liquids like gasoline, lighter fluid, and paint thinner that may have spilled. Thoroughly clean the spill and place containers in a well-ventilated area.
- Keep combustible liquids away from heat sources.

Electrical Safety

- Assume all wires on the ground are electrically charged. This includes cable TV feeds.
- Exposed outlets and wiring could present a fire and life safety hazard.
- Appliances that emit smoke or sparks should be repaired or replaced.
- Have a licensed electrician check your home for damage.

Gas Safety

- Smell and listen for leaky gas connections. If you believe there is a gas leak, immediately leave the house and leave the door(s) open.

Generator Safety

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions and guidelines when using generators.
- Use a generator or other fuel-powered machines outside the home. CO fumes are odorless and can quickly overwhelm you indoors.
- Use the appropriately sized and type power cords to carry the electric load. Overloaded cords can overheat and cause fires.
- Never run cords under rugs or carpets where heat might build up or damage to a cord may go unnoticed.
- Never connect generators to another power source such as power lines. The reverse flow of electricity or 'back-feed' can electrocute an unsuspecting utility worker.

Follow the Incident Action Plan Safety Guidelines

Common Denominators of Fire Behavior on Tragedy Fires

There are four major common denominators on fatal and near fatal fires. Such fires often occur:

1. On relatively small fires or deceptively quiet areas of large fires.
2. In relatively light fuels, such as grass, herbs, and light brush.
3. When there is an unexpected shift in wind direction, or in wind speed.
4. When fire responds to topographic conditions and runs uphill.

Standard Firefighting Orders

1. Keep informed on fire weather conditions and forecasts.
2. Know what your fire is doing at all times.
3. Base all actions on current and expected behavior of the fire.
4. Identify escape routes and safety zones, and make them known.
5. Post lookouts when there is possible danger.
6. Be alert. Keep calm. Think clearly. Act decisively.
7. Maintain prompt communications with your forces, your supervisor and adjoining forces.
8. Give clear instructions and ensure they are understood.
9. Maintain control of your forces at all times.
10. Fight fire aggressively, having provided for safety first.