



City of Kerrville
701 Main Street
Kerrville, Texas 78028
(830) 257-8000
www.kerrvilletx.gov

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Stuart Cunyus, Public Information Officer
(830) 258-1116
stuart.cunyus@kerrvilletx.gov

Building safety starts at home

Kerrville, Texas (May 8, 2023) – The International Code Council has designated the month of May as Building Safety Month. Building Safety Month is an international campaign that raises awareness about building safety. This campaign reinforces the need for the adoption of modern, regularly-updated building codes, and helps individuals, families, and businesses understand what it takes to create safe and sustainable structures.

This year's theme is "Building Safety is Personal". In the coming weeks, we will highlight various subjects around this theme. This week we are highlighting "Building Safety Starts at Home" and how building safety impacts our everyday life as family members, friends, and individuals at home.

Fire Safety at Home

Modern homes and buildings incorporate the latest building codes and are designed to minimize the possibility and effects of fire and other risks. There are things that we can do at home to stay safe and help reduce the risk of fire. If a fire does break out, it's also critical to

know how to make a safe exit – it takes less than 30 seconds for a small flame to burn completely out of control and turn into a major fire. Here are a few fire safety tips:

- Put a smoke alarm on every level of your home, outside each sleeping area, and inside every bedroom.
- Test each smoke alarm regularly. Keep batteries fresh by replacing them annually.
- Make an escape plan so everyone knows how to get out fast. Pick a meeting place outside the home where everyone will meet.
- Portable heaters need their space. Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away.
- Keep all items that can burn away from your home, clean leaves from your gutters, and clear dead leaves and branches from shrubs and trees.

Building Safety at Home

Regardless if you own your home or you're renting, keeping your home maintained is important to ensure you're living in a safe environment. Home maintenance encompasses a wide range of preventative tasks that all contribute to occupant health, occupant safety and security, and overall sustainability. Here are a few safety tips:

- Never overload electrical cords or power strips. Be sure the total amount of energy used by appliances and lights plugged into the cord or strip does not exceed that capacity.
- Don't use appliances that have damaged cords.
- For mold prevention, watch for leaky pipes, condensation, and wet spots, and fix sources of moisture problems as soon as possible.

- There are several materials and items that shouldn't be flushed down the toilet, including medication, disposable wipes, coffee grounds, and more.
- To prevent your pipes from freezing this winter, drain water from a swimming pool and water sprinkler supply lines following the manufacturer's or installer's directions.

Sustainability at Home

With fresh water supplies at risk and an ever-increasing load on the power grid threatening communities around the world, every proactive step we take at home makes a big difference. Here are a few tips:

- Install water-saving shower heads and low-flow faucet aerators, and use your water meter to check for hidden water leaks.
- Never dump anything down storm drains.
- Change the filters in the heating and cooling system of your home regularly.
- Replace your light bulbs with LEDs, which use up to 90 percent less energy and last up to 25 times longer than traditional incandescent bulbs.
- Design your home with materials that are easily recyclable, reusable, renewable, durable, affordable, and low maintenance.
- Build a rain garden to capture roof drainage and divert it to your garden or landscaping. Be sure to check your local rules on rainwater harvesting prior to installation.

For further information, you can follow the following link:

<https://www.iccsafe.org/advocacy/building-safety-month/2023-bsm-week-1/>.

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