



Fire,
Security,
Electronic
Surveillance

"QUALITY AND PEACE OF MIND SINCE 1969"

(410) 766-8336

THE ADVISOR

*A Quarterly Security Guide Especially
Prepared for the Clients and Friends of A.A.S.C.O.*

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PROTECTING YOUR HOME FROM

FIRE

If your home's security system includes smoke and heat alarm sensors, you've taken a giant step toward protecting your family night and day. But, realistically, a home fire is a fear-filled and emotionally disturbing disaster that no one ever totally recovers from psychologically. Your best defense against fire in your home is knowing where the common danger spots are—and constant vigilance.

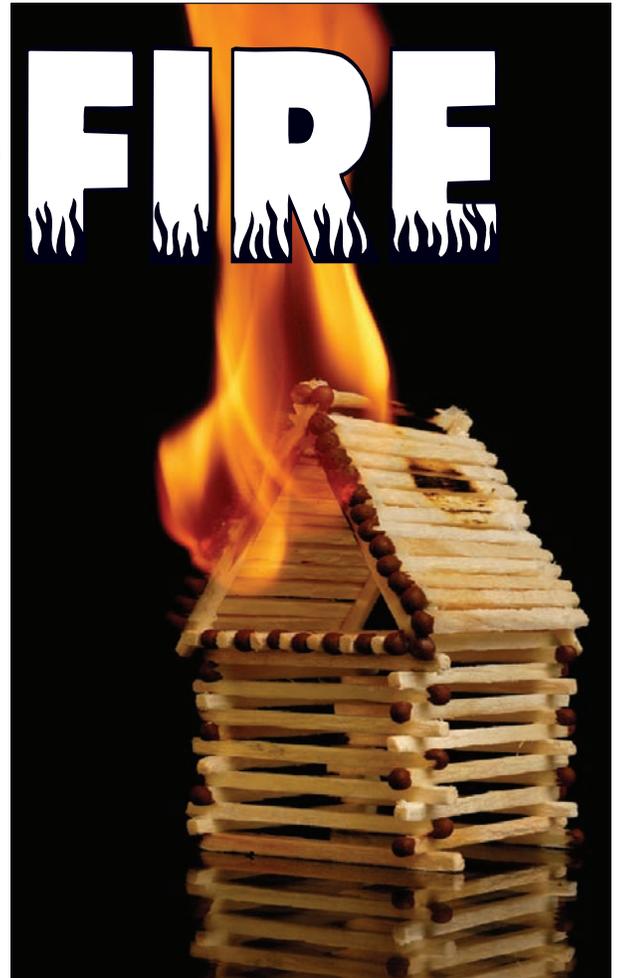
Left unchecked, a fire can double in size every 30 seconds. A wastebasket fire can consume a room in five minutes. The good news is that most fires can be prevented with common sense and simple safeguards.

The Kitchen ... This is danger zone Number One according to experts. One third of all home fires start in the kitchen. Keep butter and shortening away from hot burners and open flames. Don't use cleaning solutions or sprays near hot burners. Don't leave the kitchen while there is food cooking on the stovetop—it represents not only a fire hazard, but also a severe burn hazard to curious youngsters.

Heating Systems ... Have your furnace system and chimney inspected every season and cleaned as needed. If you have a fireplace, burn only seasoned hardwood, never paper, trash, or softwoods (such as pine) that can quickly build up a layer of combustible creosote on the chimney walls. When supplementing heat with a space heater, always remember to keep it at least three feet away from anything combustible and make certain that it can't be knocked over.

Electrical Safety ... Most electrical fires are caused by overloaded circuits or the misuse of wiring. Avoid using multi-plugs or powerblocks to make certain that you don't overload circuits. Use few extension cords and don't run them under rugs or furniture. Don't coil a long cord. Coils create an electrical resistance that generates heat.

Other general precautions include providing enough clearance around appliances for proper cooling, unplugging appliances that are not in use, and exercising caution when using appliances or power tools around water. Fire safety is not difficult to achieve, but it does require some periodic inspection to make certain that all of the safety rules are being observed. ❖



What's Inside:

- ◆ Burglaries On The Rise
- ◆ Fire Drills
- ◆ Reducing False Alarms
- ◆ Biometrics—Security At The Touch Of A Finger



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The activities of burglars and lifetime criminals seem to increase exponentially whenever economic times get hard. That can mean that your house, your neighbors' houses, and your community all are potential targets for opportunistic criminals. Here are some recommendations to follow to help you keep your family and possessions safe:

- Perform a system test. If you haven't done so recently, contact us to arrange a full capability test of your security system to make certain every component is functioning properly.
- Always arm your system when you leave your home, even if you're just running a short errand.
- Always keep your doors and windows locked.
- Avoid obvious signs of absence. Make your home look occupied when you are away. Use timers, or your system's home automation options, to turn lights on and off at normal times, and turn a radio or television on and off.
- Avoid putting empty cartons for high-priced electronics at curbside for trash pickup. Break the cartons down and bag them.
- Avoid discussing your plans regarding money with all but your most trusted friends and relatives.

It's an unfortunate fact that these *preparations* need to be an integral part of our every day thinking. However, it is much better to make the effort to be prepared for the worst-case scenario, rather than allow a desperate criminal to catch you off-guard. ❖



BURGLARIES ON THE RISE



FIRE DRILLS

Thousands of people are injured by fire every year in North America, despite the fact that nearly everyone knows the major safety precautions:

- Install smoke detectors on every floor, test them on a regular basis and change the batteries twice a year.
- Never smoke in bed. (Careless smoking is the leading cause of fire deaths.)
- Keep a fire extinguisher in the kitchen.
- Develop and practice a fire evacuation plan with your family.

Almost everyone knows these basics. However, one of these primary safety precautions also includes an assumption that can prove dangerous, or even deadly. Can you guess which one?

If you guessed fire extinguisher, you're absolutely correct. Having a fire extinguisher handy is a far cry from knowing how to use it. Small fire extinguishers are very reasonably priced—and they're available at practically every major hardware and department store chain. This autumn, why not schedule a fire drill for your whole family.

Buy an extra fire extinguisher exactly like the one you keep in the kitchen. Then, take it outside for a practice run. Let every family member—including children who are old enough—take a turn using it. It allows everyone to get the feel of how it works and what to do in an emergency. Remember, there's no better protection than actual experience, so why not plan a family fire drill this weekend. ❖

REDUCING FALSE ALARMS

When false alarms occur frequently, everyone involved gets frustrated. Here's a few pointers to help reduce false alarm incidents.

1. Make certain that you—and everyone who has a key to your home—knows how to operate your security system. According to industry statistics, over 75 percent of all false alarms are caused by individuals who didn't know how to properly arm or disarm the system.

2. Nearly 33 percent of all false alarms are caused by someone who does not live at the location where the security system is installed. Make sure you instruct anyone who has access to your home on the proper way to operate the system.

3. Make sure you are comfortable with the amount of time you have to arm and disarm your system. If you feel rushed or panicky about operating your system's controls, call us and we'll make appropriate time adjustments for you.

4. Keep pets, fans, heaters, balloons, etc., away from motion sensor areas when your system is armed. Pets cause over 10 percent of all motion-related false alarms.

5. Before leaving your home, make certain that all protected windows and doors are closed and locked. Over 15 percent of all false alarms are caused when the alarm is set and there is a protected door or window that is ajar.

6. Test your system regularly to make certain that all components are functioning properly—for your security, and for false alarm prevention.

If a false alarm does occur, don't panic. Enter your disarm code carefully to reset your security system. Resetting your security system may send an authorized cancellation signal to the central station. Do not leave your home until the system is reset or until the central monitoring station calls and you give them your password or ID code.

The occasional false alarm can be dealt with. Frequent false alarms can result in serious consequences and endanger your family and property in the event of a real emergency. ❖



Biometrics— Security At The Touch Of A Finger

Are you ready for the age of biometrics? It may be much closer than you think. Today, more and more banks are using, or are seriously considering using, biometric identity devices as a substitute for bank cards and PINs (Personal Identification Numbers) at ATM machines.

Biometric systems “read” the unique features of your own individual physiology. They are virtually foolproof, since no two human fingerprints or handprints are the same.

Biometric scanners are already being offered by some notebook PC manufacturers. They have been in use for many years in access control applications. Their use at ATMs promises to save time and eliminate security concerns about lost cards and stolen PIN numbers. ❖

Dear Valued Customer,

Welcome to our Fall 2012 newsletter. With cooler weather approaching, it is time to secure your home and property from the elements. Take a moment to check your windows and doors. To check your security system, open a window or door with a detection device and check to make sure the ready light goes out on your touchpad. This is a good tip to follow after storms.

As the reliability issues of telephone technology change, we want you to know that there are cellular back up options for your security system. Please give Ronnie a call at (410) 766-8336 ex. 21 for the products available in your area.

Be sure to secure your home and businesses against intrusion, both natural and criminal. As we prepare for the heavily scheduled fall, we sometimes overlook basic security. Be sure to lock your windows and doors, and arm your security system each time you leave your home, and at the end of your business day.

Also, please remember to test your alarm system.

Sincerely,

Get The Latest Security Advantage For Your Security System With Back-up Cellular Monitoring

Please call for details

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Do You Smell Natural Gas?

Natural gas has a distinctive odor that everyone in your home should learn to recognize. Even an occasional "whiff" of natural gas in your kitchen, laundry or furnace area should be cause for immediate concern.

The characteristic scent of natural gas is a man-made addition that is intended to help protect consumers from fire and explosion hazards. Here are some important considerations every member of your family should know in the event someone smells even a whiff of natural gas:

- Don't cause a spark or ignite a flame or match! If you're smoking a cigarette, extinguish it immediately. If you're in the dark, do not turn on the lights because the electrical switch may cause a spark.

- Call for help immediately. Your local gas company has emergency repair personnel on call 24 hours a day to repair suspected gas leaks. Call them immediately, no matter how faint the smell of gas may be.

- Get outside! If the odor of gas is strong, leave your home immediately. Don't attempt to ventilate the house by opening windows and don't use your own phone. Call the gas company's emergency line from a remote location.

- Stay outside! Don't re-enter your home until after a trained gas company representative arrives, assesses the situation and gives you a clear indication that it's safe for you and your family to return to your home. ❖

