

Residential Fire & Life Safety Self-Inspection Checklist

For homeowners, renters and residents - 2025 California Fire Code / home-fire safety guidance

How to use this checklist. Walk through your home and property and mark each item OK, Needs Attention, or N/A. Correct unsafe conditions as soon as practical. This educational self-assessment does not replace an official inspection, permit, code determination, or professional electrical/mechanical evaluation.

Property Information

Address:

Resident/
Owner:

Date:

Phone/
Email:

1. Emergency Access & Address Identification

California reference: 2025 CFC Section 505.1. Access requirements may vary by property and local/Title 14 applicability.

Safety Item	OK	Needs Attention	N/A
Address numbers are visible and legible from the street or road, contrast with the background, and are maintained.	☐	☐	☐
Address characters are at least 4 inches high with a minimum 1/2-inch stroke width.	☐	☐	☐
If the home is not visible from the public road, a monument, pole, sign or other clear address marker identifies the property entrance.	☐	☐	☐
Driveway and access route are kept clear of parked vehicles, stored materials, low branches and other obstructions that could delay emergency vehicles.	☐	☐	☐
Gates can be opened quickly and do not prevent emergency access.	☐	☐	☐

2. Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Alarms

California references: 2025 CFC Sections 907.2.11 and 915.2. CO requirements apply where required by the code.

Safety Item	OK	Needs Attention	N/A
Working smoke alarm is installed inside every room used for sleeping.	☐	☐	☐
Working smoke alarm is installed outside each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of bedrooms.	☐	☐	☐
Working smoke alarm is installed on every story of the dwelling, including basements.	☐	☐	☐
Smoke alarms are tested monthly and are not disabled, covered or missing batteries.	☐	☐	☐
Smoke alarms are replaced when 10 years old or as directed by the manufacturer.	☐	☐	☐
Where CO detection is required, a CO alarm is installed outside each separate sleeping area and on every occupiable level, including basements.	☐	☐	☐
If a CO source is located in a bedroom or attached bathroom, required CO detection is provided within the bedroom.	☐	☐	☐
Smoke/CO alarms are listed/approved for their intended use and maintained according to manufacturer instructions.	☐	☐	☐

3. Home Escape & Emergency Planning

USFA/NFPA guidance recommends planning two ways out, keeping exits clear and practicing with everyone in the household.

Safety Item	OK	Needs Attention	N/A
Everyone in the home knows at least two ways out of each room whenever possible.	☐	☐	☐
Doors, windows and exit paths open easily and are not blocked by furniture, storage or security devices that prevent escape.	☐	☐	☐
The household has an outside meeting place a safe distance from the home.	☐	☐	☐
Children, older adults, people with disabilities and anyone needing assistance are included in the escape plan.	☐	☐	☐
The household practices the home fire escape plan at least twice each year.	☐	☐	☐
Everyone knows to get out, stay out, and call 9-1-1 from outside during a fire.	☐	☐	☐

4. Cooking & Kitchen Safety

Safety Item	OK	Needs Attention	N/A
Cooking is attended; frying, grilling, boiling and broiling are not left unattended.	☐	☐	☐
Towels, paper products, food packaging, curtains and other combustibles are kept away from the stovetop.	☐	☐	☐
Pot and pan handles are turned inward and children/pets are kept away from hot cooking areas.	☐	☐	☐
Cooking appliances and cords are in good condition with no damaged plugs or wiring.	☐	☐	☐
A lid or other safe method is available to smother a small pan fire; water is never used on a grease fire.	☐	☐	☐
If a cooking fire grows or cannot be safely controlled, everyone knows to leave, close the door if possible, and call 9-1-1.	☐	☐	☐

5. Electrical & Appliance Safety

Safety Item	OK	Needs Attention	N/A
Electrical cords, plugs and receptacles are not cracked, frayed, scorched, loose or damaged.	☐	☐	☐
Outlets and switches do not feel unusually warm and do not show signs of arcing or discoloration.	☐	☐	☐
Extension cords are used only temporarily and are not used as permanent wiring.	☐	☐	☐
Power strips are not daisy-chained or plugged into other power strips/relocatable taps.	☐	☐	☐
Major appliances are plugged directly into appropriate wall outlets as recommended by the manufacturer.	☐	☐	☐
Space heaters are plugged directly into wall outlets, not extension cords or power strips.	☐	☐	☐
Electrical panels are accessible and not blocked by storage.	☐	☐	☐
Lithium-ion batteries and chargers are undamaged, use compatible/listed charging equipment, and are not charged where they can block an exit.	☐	☐	☐

6. Heating, Fireplaces & Fuel-Burning Equipment

Safety Item	OK	Needs Attention	N/A
Anything that can burn is kept at least 3 feet away from fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators and portable space heaters.	☐	☐	☐
Portable heaters are on a stable surface, have tip-over protection when applicable, and are turned off when leaving the room or going to bed.	☐	☐	☐
Furnaces, fireplaces, wood stoves, chimneys and vents are maintained and inspected/cleaned as appropriate.	☐	☐	☐
The oven or stovetop is never used to heat the home.	☐	☐	☐
Fireplace/wood-stove sparks and embers are controlled with a screen or approved enclosure.	☐	☐	☐
Ashes are cooled, placed in a metal container with a tight-fitting lid, and stored outside away from buildings and combustibles.	☐	☐	☐
Fuel-burning appliance vents are unobstructed and terminate safely outdoors.	☐	☐	☐

7. Garage, Workshop, Laundry & Storage

Safety Item	OK	Needs Attention	N/A
Gasoline, propane, paints, solvents and other flammable products are stored safely in approved containers and away from ignition sources.	☐	☐	☐
Propane cylinders are not stored inside the dwelling or in locations prohibited by the manufacturer/code.	☐	☐	☐
Oily rags are stored in a safe covered metal container and away from heat sources.	☐	☐	☐
Dryer lint filter is cleaned after each load and the dryer exhaust/duct is kept clean and unobstructed.	☐	☐	☐
Stairs, hallways, doors and windows are free of accumulated storage that could block escape or firefighter access.	☐	☐	☐
Combustible materials are kept away from water heaters, furnaces, electrical equipment and other heat-producing equipment.	☐	☐	☐

8. Candles, Smoking, Medical Oxygen & Open Flame

Safety Item	OK	Needs Attention	N/A
Candles are placed in sturdy noncombustible holders and kept away from combustibles, children and pets.	☐	☐	☐
Candles and other open flames are extinguished before leaving the room or going to sleep.	☐	☐	☐
Matches and lighters are stored where children cannot reach them.	☐	☐	☐
Smoking materials are fully extinguished; smoking in bed or when drowsy is avoided.	☐	☐	☐
If medical oxygen is used, oxygen equipment is kept at least 5 feet from heat sources, open flames and electrical devices, and no smoking/open flame occurs nearby.	☐	☐	☐

9. Portable Generators & Carbon Monoxide Safety

Safety Item	OK	Needs Attention	N/A
Portable generators are operated outdoors in a well-ventilated area away from doors, windows and vents.	☐	☐	☐
Generator exhaust is directed away from the home and neighboring occupied areas.	☐	☐	☐
Generators are never operated inside a home, garage, enclosed porch, shed or other enclosed/partially enclosed space.	☐	☐	☐
Fuel is stored safely away from heat and ignition sources; the generator is allowed to cool before refueling.	☐	☐	☐
CO alarms are tested and everyone knows to move outdoors and call for help if a CO alarm sounds or CO symptoms are suspected.	☐	☐	☐

10. Wildfire & Defensible Space - Where Applicable

California law requires 100 feet of defensible space in specified areas. CAL FIRE publishes Zone 0/1/2 guidance; confirm current local and state requirements for your property.

Safety Item	OK	Needs Attention	N/A
Required defensible space is maintained around structures, generally up to 100 feet or to the property line where California law applies.	☐	☐	☐
The first 5 feet around the home, decks and attached structures are kept as ember-resistant as practical; dead vegetation, debris and easily ignited materials are removed.	☐	☐	☐
Dead plants, dry grass, weeds, leaves and needles are removed from the yard, roof, gutters, decks and under exterior stairs/decks.	☐	☐	☐
Tree branches are kept at least 10 feet from chimney and stovepipe outlets.	☐	☐	☐
Grass in the extended defensible-space area is maintained at no more than 4 inches where required/applicable.	☐	☐	☐
Trees, shrubs and other vegetation are spaced and maintained to reduce continuous fuels.	☐	☐	☐
Firewood, lumber and other combustible storage are located away from the home; CAL FIRE recommends relocating these materials into the outer defensible-space zone.	☐	☐	☐
Propane tanks and outbuildings have vegetation clearance around them; CAL FIRE guidance calls for 10 feet of clearance from flammable vegetation.	☐	☐	☐
Driveway access and roadside vegetation are maintained so emergency vehicles can reach the property safely.	☐	☐	☐
Current CAL FIRE, county and local defensible-space requirements are checked because local standards can be more restrictive.	☐	☐	☐

Resident Action Plan

Immediate / Today	
Within 7 Days	
Within 30 Days	
Professional Help Needed	

Do not delay correcting serious hazards. Examples include missing/nonworking smoke alarms, blocked exits, damaged or overheating electrical equipment, fuel leaks, unsafe heater clearances, or generator use in an enclosed space. For an active fire, gas emergency, carbon monoxide emergency, or immediate danger, leave the area and call 9-1-1.

Primary References

- 2025 California Fire Code Sections 505.1, 907.2.11 and 915.
- CAL FIRE / California Board of Forestry defensible-space and Zone 0/1/2 guidance.
- U.S. Fire Administration home escape, smoke alarm, heating, carbon monoxide, electrical and household fire-safety guidance.
- NFPA home-fire safety guidance for cooking, smoke alarms, escape planning and prevention.

Newberry Springs Fire Department | Fire Prevention | Community Self-Inspection Resource