



Home Tips®



• CHRISTIAN BUILDING INSPECTORS, INC., 1003 STAR COURT, NORCROSS, GEORGIA 30093, (770) 925-8518 • AUGUST 1996 •

Q & A

Is Your Home Safe?

We just purchase our first home and would like to know what home safety items we should consider installing or testing on a regular basis?

You are showing wisdom with your new home by making it as safe as possible. Some people do not think about what could happen in their home and some accidents can be fatal.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

The first item I would purchase is a fire extinguisher. I recently had a fire and know the importance of having one available. I had a small extinguisher convenient so I grabbed it first. It lasted about 30 seconds which was not long enough to put out the fire. I had to run for a larger one that was hanging in the garage. When you first have an emergency, you better know exactly where your fire extinguisher is located because you only have seconds to respond. Next, be sure your fire extinguisher is large enough for the job needed. A small extinguisher may be sufficient for a small grease fire on the stove or maybe for your automobile but be sure you have a larger one in case the fire gets out of hand. Some of the larger ones are heavy so be sure to purchase the largest one that can be handled easily by your family.

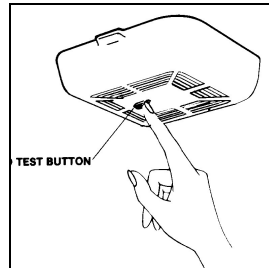


They come with the following designations: Type "A" is designed for combustible materials such as wood, cloth, paper and many plastics. Type "B" is designed for flammable liquids such as gasoline, oil, grease, paint and flammable gas. Type "C" covers electrical fires including wiring, circuit breakers, machinery and appliances. There are also multipurpose or "combination portable fire extinguishers on the market - Type BC and Type ABC. Be sure to purchase the one that best fits your needs. It is particularly dangerous to use water or just a Type "A" extinguisher on a grease or electrical fire.

SMOKE DETECTORS

Smoke detectors should be located on each level of your home with one located right outside the bedrooms. They can be either "hard wired" which is wired into the electrical

system with a battery backup or if an electrical connection is not available, just use the battery type.



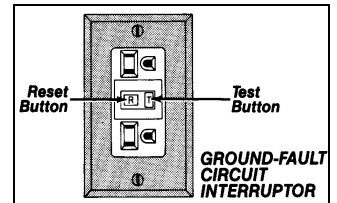
The most convenient location is mounted on the wall as high as possible but still can be reached to test the batteries on a regular basis. Sometimes when they are located on the ceiling, people forget to test them. Never unplug a battery when it begins to "chirp". This is a warning to replace the battery.

OPTIONAL EXITS

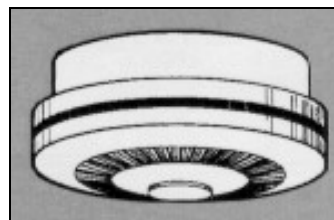
One safety item most people do not think about is an optional exit from the second floor in case a fire blocks the bottom of the stairs. Some homes come with two sets of stairs but most homes do not. Look at your home to see if you can exit out a high deck or any other means to safety. If not, it would be a good idea to purchase a rope ladder that can be attached to a window sill in case of an emergency. Leave it in a closet close to the window and it will always be there in case you ever need it.

GFCI OUTLETS

GFCI's or Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters are inexpensive electrical outlets that prevent you from receiving a severe or fatal electrical shock. All new homes automatically come with GFCI's, but they are not required in older homes. We suggest installing GFCI's in all bathrooms, around the kitchen sink, in the garage, in all the exterior outlets and any place where you may come in contact with dampness or water.



CARBON MONOXIDE



Carbon monoxide (CO) is produced by burning any fuel. Therefore all fuel-burning appliances in your home are a potential CO source. Older furnaces are more likely to produce heavy

concentrations of carbon monoxide and should be inspected and serviced annually. The Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends installing at least one CO detector per household located outside the sleeping area. They can be purchased at most home centers.

