



Fire Safety For Your Church

A Presentation of The
Clayton County Fire Department

A Cause For Alarm



- **Over 2 million reported fires each year**
- **Of those 100,000 are arson fires**
- **1,000's of those occur at churches & church related institutions**
- **Ten\$ of million\$ in damage result annually**
- **30,000 civilians are injured each year**
- **6,000 civilians die each year**



What causes fires in churches?

- Arson is the leading cause of church fires
- A fire may be set for a variety of reasons:
 - Vandalism
 - Pyromania
 - Cover evidence of other crimes
 - Revenge
 - For Profit
- Vandalism & Cover up are the top two arson causes



Churches Burned By Arson

- In 1999 Clayton County Church set on fire to cover crime
- In 1999 an arson by two juveniles in a vacant apartment block in Holyoke, Massachusetts spread to 11 other buildings resulting in a multi-million dollar loss including a cathedral.
- In 1998 Henry County Church set on fire and destroyed by pyromaniacs
- In 1996 Clayton County Church set fire and destroyed by pyromaniacs
- Series of Church fires in Georgia set by Devil Worshiper, resulted in 1 firefighter losing his life



Arson Risk Assessment



OUTSIDE

- Does your church have secured openings? Check both doors and windows.
- Does your church have adequate outside lighting?
- Do you trim your bushes and shrubs so they don't block the front of windows and doors from view?
- Do you have fencing to keep arsonists away from areas which are hidden from view?



Arson Risk Assessment

INSIDE

- Do you have a properly operating burglar alarm system?
- Do you have working smoke detectors on each floor and do you test them weekly?
- Do you store all matches and lighters out of reach of children?
- Do you purchase furnishings that are less likely to burn?

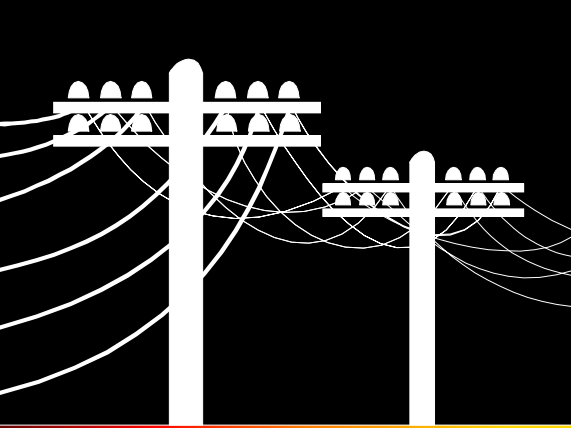


Arson Risk Assessment

INSIDE

- Do you have and practice an evacuation plan in case of an emergency?
- Do you limit the number of people who hold keys to your church? Is there accountability?
- Do you keep your exits and stairways clear of empty boxes and other items that can burn?

What causes accidental fires in churches?



- Faulty wiring is 2nd most common cause of church fires

Many church building are old

- If your church building is 30 years old, you should have the wiring inspected by a qualified electrical contractor
- Other common causes: lightning, faulty furnaces & stoves, overheated organ motors, smoking materials, careless use of candles



Fire Prevention is The Key

- Prevention is the Best protection you can provide your church
- Prevention efforts must be ongoing to be effective
Tour Building Interior Monthly
- Look for places where fires might start
Piles of old rags
Overloaded electrical sockets
Storage too close to heat producing equipment
- Does Your Church have Bldg/Content insurance?



Structural Fire Safety

- Exit doors operate properly
- Exits free of obstructions at all times
- Exit signs light
- Any remodeling, additions, or repairs inspected by Fire Marshal's Office
- Have furnace cleaned & serviced annually by qualified professional



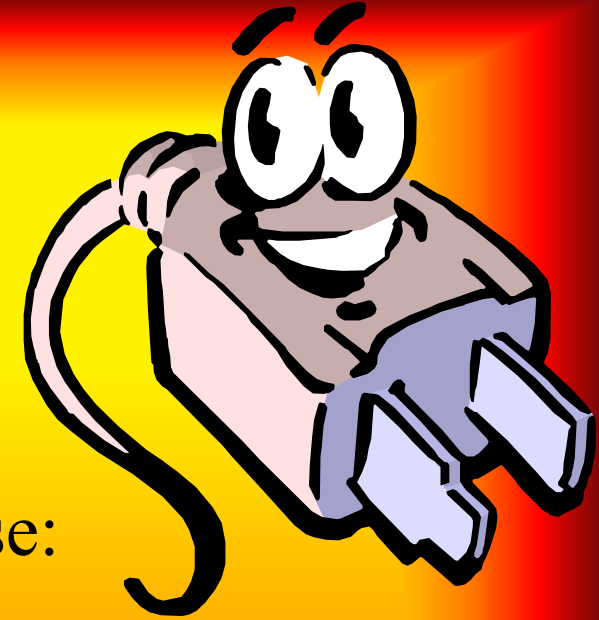
Housekeeping & Fire Safety



- Keep paper & cloth decorations away from light bulbs, wiring, and other sources of heat
- If you permit smoking in your church, provide a designated area with safety-type ash trays
- Clean up debris from gatherings on same day
- Don't use the Heat/AC room for storage
- Don't keep gasoline or gasoline powered equipment stored inside the church building
- Keep kitchen vent hood filters clean



Electrical Fire Safety



- Use proper size breakers/fuses
- Inspect all electrical cords now in use:
 - If Frayed, throw away
 - If Cracked, throw away
 - If Dried out, throw away
- Make sure all junction boxes have covers
- Check all major appliances for proper connections and grounding
- Make sure all wall sockets & light switches have face plates

Fire Extinguishers Are Tools



- For SMALL fires only
- 1 for every 2,500 square feet/each level
Travel < 75 feet to reach extinguisher
- Types:
 - A Ordinary combustibles fires
 - B Flammable liquid fires
 - C Electrical fires
- We recommend minimum 2A40BC
- Inspect monthly
- Have serviced annually
- P.A.S.S. to operate a fire extinguisher; get training



Do You Have Questions?

Youth Are Invited To Join CCFD Exploring?

Fire Explorers complete a training program to learn about the Clayton County Fire Department and to prepare themselves for a career in the Fire Service. Weekly meetings attended by the Explorers provide them with instructions in areas such as Fire Safety, Operations and Procedures, and Fire Tactics.

The Explorer Post 601 Youth Challenge

- Rapid Dress
- Find the nozzle
- Connect the hoses
- Teamwork race



This has Been A Presentation of The
Clayton County Fire Marshal's Office



ARSON IN CLAYTON COUNTY

In 2001:

204 Investigations; 104 Set Fires

\$2,904,033 Direct Property Loss

\$1.3 Million Increase Over '00