



# American Red Cross

of Greater Grand Rapids

American Red Cross of  
Greater Grand Rapids  
1050 Fuller Ave. NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
[www.greatergrandrapids.redcross.org](http://www.greatergrandrapids.redcross.org)

## NEWS RELEASE

*A Safe Community Begins With You*

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**For Immediate Release**

## October is Fire Safety Month *Your Red Cross Provides Tips to Help Stay Safe*

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., (October 1, 2008)** – October is Fire Safety Month and the **American Red Cross of Greater Grand Rapids** urges our community to take a few simple steps to prevent home fires and help prepare their home and family in case a fire happens.

Nationally, the number of home fires the American Red Cross responds to is up 10 percent since the year 2000. Alarmingly, only 26 percent of families have actually developed and practiced a home fire escape plan, according to a May 2006 poll conducted by ORC International for the Red Cross.

### **The American Red Cross offers the following recommendations regarding home fire prevention and safety:**

- Remember that most home fires can be prevented.
- Keep anything that can catch on fire—pot holders, oven mitts, wooden utensils, paper or plastic bags, food packaging, and towels or curtains—away from your stovetop, oven or any appliance that generates heat.
- Keep all potential sources of fuel like paper, clothing, bedding or rugs at least three feet away from space heaters, stoves, or fireplaces.
- Portable heaters and fireplaces should never be left unattended. Turn off space heaters and make sure any embers in the fireplace are extinguished before going to bed or leaving home.
- Never use a cooking range or oven to heat your home.
- Never leave cooking food unattended, and avoid wearing loose clothing or dangling sleeves while cooking.
- Install a smoke alarm on every level of your home and outside of sleeping areas.
- Test smoke alarms once a month by pushing the test button and change batteries once a year.
- Make sure everyone in your family knows at least two ways to escape from every room of your home.
- Practice your fire escape plan at least twice a year. Designate a meeting spot outside and a safe distance from your home. Make sure all family members know the meeting spot.

Governed by volunteers and supported by community donations, the American Red Cross of Greater Grand Rapids is dedicated to saving lives and helping people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. Your local Red Cross annually mobilizes relief to hundreds of families affected by disasters, trains thousands of people in lifesaving skills and more. For more information visit [www.ggr.redcross.org](http://www.ggr.redcross.org), call us at (616) 456-8661 or stop by our offices at 1050 Fuller Ave. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

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