

# The Fire 4-1-1

APRIL 2018

**SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:**

- You can prevent a fire in your home!
- May is Electrical Safety Month!
- Spring is here! Learn more about what to include on your Spring cleaning list!

## Fire Prevention!

Firefighters and emergency responders work every day to keep families and homes safe. Oftentimes the fires that we respond to could have been prevented by following a few simple safety tips. In an effort to reduce the number of preventable fires and reduce home fire injuries, deaths and property loss, the United States Fire Administration initiated a national program called “Fire is Everyone’s Fight!”. The goal is to reduce fire-related issues by changing how people think about fire and fire prevention.

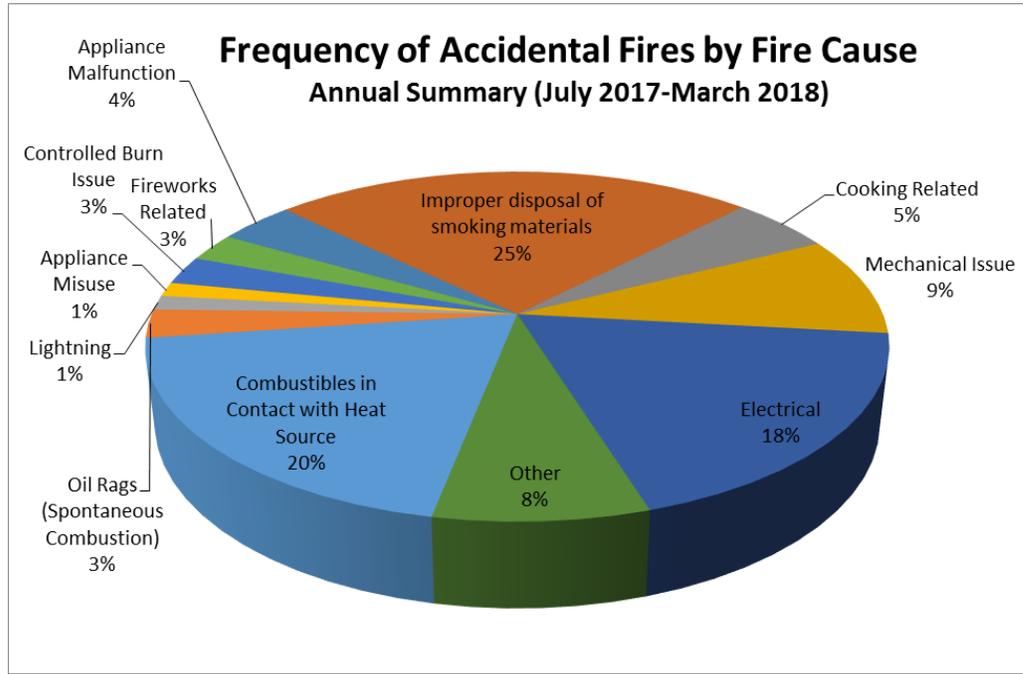
By working together with the community, we hope that residents will begin to recognize and understand the importance of taking small steps to make their homes and families safer. You may start by ensuring you have working smoke alarms in your home, creating a home escape plan with your family, and completing a home fire safety checklist! To learn more about what you can do to prevent a fire visit your local fire-rescue station because “Fire is Everyone’s Fight!”.



**Accidental Fire Data for Fiscal Year 2018 Third Quarter**

Fire Cause	Total Number of Fires	Total Dollar Loss Q3
Electrical	6	\$961,000.00
Cooking	2	\$20,000.00
Improper disposal of smoking materials	8	\$69,500.00
Combustibles in contact with heat source	5	\$81,800.00
Other	2	\$51,000.00
Oil rags (spontaneous combustion)	2	\$10,500.00
Appliance malfunction	2	\$350,000.00
Fireworks related	1	\$2,000.00
Appliance Misuse	1	\$5,000.00
Controlled Burn Issue	2	\$7,500.00
<b>Total Number of Unintentional Fires</b>	<b>31</b>	
<b>Total Cost of Damages</b>		<b>\$1,558,300.00</b>

\*For more specific descriptions of fire causes visit [www.loudoun.gov/firerisk](http://www.loudoun.gov/firerisk).

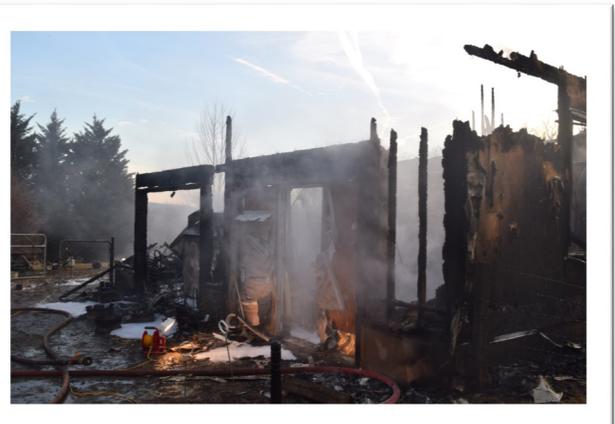


## May is Electrical Safety Month!

**Electricity helps make our lives easier but there are times when we can take its power and its potential for fire-related hazards for granted.**

The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) sponsors National Electrical Safety Month in May. The campaign raises awareness of potential home electrical hazards, the importance of electrical fire safety, and the safety of electrical workers. The Department of Fire and Rescue recommends the following tips to help reduce your risk!

- ✦ Have all electrical work completed by a licensed electrician.
- ✦ Ensure extension cords are properly rated for their intended use, indoor or outdoor, and meet or exceed the power needs of the appliance being used.
- ✦ Extension cords are for temporary use only. Hire an electrician install additional outlets, if necessary.
- ✦ Check electrical cords to make sure they are not running across doorways or under carpets where damaged cords can go unnoticed.
- ✦ Use power strips that have internal overload protection. These surge protectors should be replaced periodically to ensure they function as designed.



This fire was caused by a failure of an extension cord and caused \$350,000 in damages. When not used properly, extension cords can overheat and become a fire hazard.

- *Electrical fires in Loudoun County caused \$961,000 in damages since July 2017.*
- *There are more than 45,000 home electrical fires each year. \**
- *From 2011-2015, eighteen percent of fire deaths in the United States occurred in fires that were electrical-related.\*\**

*\*Source: United States Fire Administration*

*\*\*Source: National Fire Protection Association*

# Prevent Dangerous Mulch Fires!

Each year during spring and summer, hundreds of mulch fires are reported across the nation. These fires often start out small and undetected, but can quickly develop into a devastating fire, causing major damage to buildings, homes, and other structures.

The most common cause of mulch fires is human carelessness through improper disposal of smoking materials. Smokers often discard lit smoking materials into landscaped areas outside homes and buildings. Fires that start in landscaping mulch or other organic planting materials can spread quickly into shrubbery, up exterior walls and into the home or building.

Loudoun County Fire and Rescue reminds residents to use caution and common sense when it comes to the use of landscaping mulch. To help prevent mulch fires at your home or business, please follow these safety tips:

- ◆ Keep landscaped mulch beds as moist as possible.
- ◆ Recognize that hot and dry spells, along with windy conditions allow mulch fires to start more readily.
- ◆ Maintain at least 18 inches of clearance between the edge of the mulch bed and combustible building materials, such as exterior vinyl siding and decks.
- ◆ Use non-combustible materials such as river rock, pea gravel or crushed rock for the first 18" around the base of a building with combustible siding and around gas and electrical meters.
- ◆ Consider using brick, block, stone, or other types of non-combustible

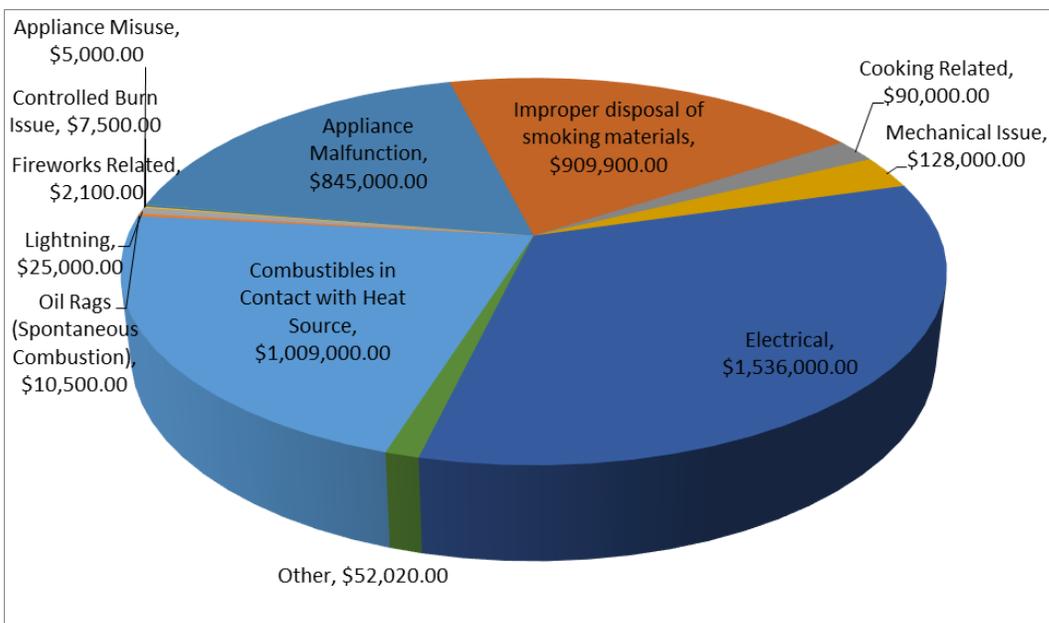


This fire was caused by improperly discarded smoking materials. Since there was no space between the mulch bed and vinyl siding, the fire quickly began to extend to the exterior siding.

exterior siding when building or renovating a structure.

- ◆ Use only approved receptacles to dispose of matches, cigarettes and cigars such as sturdy metal or ceramic containers filled with sand, located away from the structure.
- ◆ Immediately report any smoke or fire by calling 9-1-1.

## Accidental Fire Dollar Loss By Fire Cause Annual Summary (July 2017-March 2018)



### Spring Has Sprung!

Start your Spring cleaning with these safety tips:

- ★ Test your smoke alarms, and replace any alarms that are 10 years old or older.
- ★ Test your carbon monoxide alarms, and replace any alarms that are 7 years old or older.
- ★ Check your dryer vents and clean the hosing.
- ★ Clean clutter inside and outside your home.
- ★ Check the cords on your appliances. If any are cracked or frayed, repair or replace them.
- ★ Practice your home fire escape plan.



**Loudoun County  
Fire Marshal's Office**

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Ashburn, VA 20148

Phone: 703-737-8600

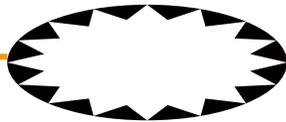
Fax: 703-737-8595

[www.loudoun.gov/firemarshal](http://www.loudoun.gov/firemarshal)

The Fire Marshal's Office seeks to provide a safe working and living environment for residents, workers, and travelers within Loudoun County. Key aspects of the mission include:

- Investigation into the origin and cause of fire- and explosive-related incidents in the county as well as offenses related to threats to burn and/or bomb
- Investigation into the release of hazardous materials
- Juvenile firesetter intervention
- Proactive public fire and life safety education programs
- Rapid and professional emergency response
- Reduction of fire risk through abatement of common fire prevention code violations

There are several special operational programs, such as the Bomb Squad and the Canine Program, however these are collateral responsibilities assigned to regular staff, which transcend section boundaries.



**PUT A FINGER ON IT!**  
WORKING SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES.

Smoke alarms are one of the best and easiest safety features you can have to alert you and your family if there is a fire in your home. The Loudoun County Fire and Rescue offers free smoke alarm assessments to Loudoun County residents. During the visit, fire-rescue personnel ensure the home is adequately protected by working smoke alarms. They also provide valuable information on other fire safety topics. To request an assessment visit [www.loudoun.gov/smokealarms](http://www.loudoun.gov/smokealarms) and complete the online form or contact your local fire-rescue station.