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**Grants Pass Department  
Of Public Safety**

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**Contact Information:**

**Non-Emergency**

**541-450-6260**

**Fire**

**541-450-6200**

**City Hall**

**541-450-6000**



## **Neighborhood Watch Newsletter** Nov/Dec 2017

### **Chimney Fire Safety**

A clean chimney can help prevent fires and structural damage to your property. Regular cleaning of your chimney or flues will eliminate the build up of soot and clear obstructions such as bird or animal nests, leaves and debris. You will also reduce emissions into the atmosphere by assisting the complete combustion of the fuel.

It is not sufficient to use a vacuum cleaner and you should ensure your chimney flue is inspected regularly to prevent fires breaking out. Remember that fire guards can prevent serious injury or death and spark guards can prevent a serious fire.

Chimneys should be swept:

At least once a year when using smokeless fuels

At least once a year when using bituminous coal

Every three months when using wood

Once a year when using oil

Once a year when using gas.

Prevention:

Don't use flammable liquids such as petrol or paraffin to light your fire.

Don't burn paper or rubbish.

Do not overload the fire with fuel.

Go into the loft occasionally, when the fire is alight, to check for smoke from cracks, defective brickwork or mortar joints.

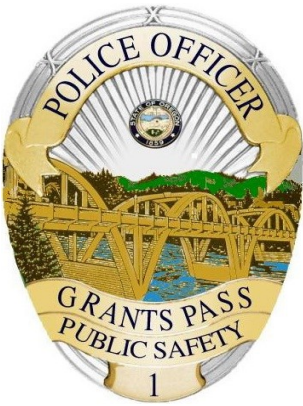
If a chimney fire happens:

Leave the room, close the door and alert other people in the house

Get out of the house, call 911 and ask for the fire & rescue service.

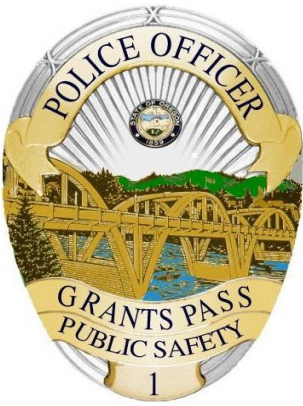
Stay out until the fire and rescue service arrive.

Always ensure you have a working smoke alarm and carbon monoxide detector.



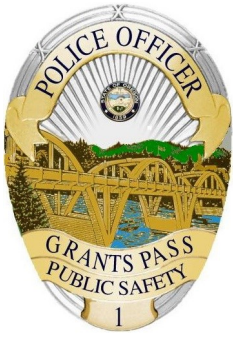
## Personal Safety

- Make sure someone close to you knows where you are going and when you will return.
- Avoid dark, deserted routes, even if they are the shortest.
- Carry a little extra money for emergency telephone or transportation use.
- When possible, travel with friends or relatives.
- Hold your purse close to your body, don't dangle it.
- If you put your purse in a shopping cart, secure it to the shopping cart and keep it zipped up.
- Don't overburden yourself carrying packages or groceries.
- Have your key in hand when you approach your vehicle or your residence.
- Be alert to your surroundings and the people around you.
- Carry a cellular phone or pepper spray if possible.
- If someone attacks you, scream, kick, hit, bite, scratch, etc., to do what it takes to get away.
- Get the best description you can and call 9-1-1.



## Theft Prevention

- In order to decrease the likelihood of becoming a victim of theft, you should:
- Carry only what is needed.
- Keep a list of your credit card and debit card information in a safe place at home.
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Purses or handbags should be closed and carried close to your body with your arm loosely around it.
- Carry your wallet in a pocket or bag that you have with you.
- If you are unable to carry your purse on you, use the baby seat straps in the cart to tie your purse down. Keep your purse closed or zippered shut to limit easy access to its contents.
- Do not put personal identification numbers, social security cards or birth certificates in your wallet or purse.
- Do not leave your purse or wallet unattended, even for a moment.
- If your purse or wallet is stolen, contact the police department and file a report. Contact your credit card and bank to report the items stolen. Monitor your accounts so you don't become a victim of fraud.



## E.D.I.T.H.

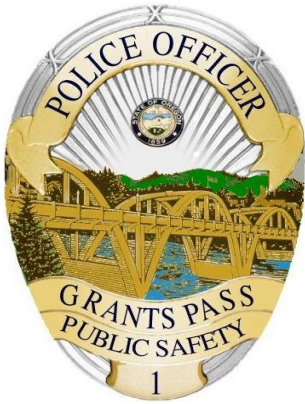
### Exit Drills In The Home

When the smoke alarm sounds, get out and stay out! Eighty percent of fire deaths happen in the home. That's why you need working smoke alarms and a plan to get out of the home in case of fire.

The Grants Pass Department of Public Safety Fire Prevention Bureau wants you to make a home escape plan. Get everyone in your home together and find all the doors and windows that lead outside. Make sure they open easily. Windows or doors with security bars, grills or window guards should have emergency release devices so they can be used for escape.

Know at least two ways out of every room, if possible. One way out will be the door and the second way out may be a window or another door. Stairways and other ways out should be clear of furniture and clutter. Choose a meeting place a safe distance from the home where everyone should meet once they've escaped. Have a plan for anyone in your home who may need assistance to escape, such as young children, older adults or people with disabilities. Make sure everyone knows how to call 9-1-1.

Practice your plan with everyone in your home at least twice a year. Push the smoke alarm button to start the drill. Close doors behind you as you leave and go to your meeting place outside. Practice your escape plan night and day and practice using different ways out.



## SCAMS

The Grants Pass Department of Public Safety has received numerous calls from concerned citizens regarding phone calls and mail they have received from what appear to be legitimate businesses. The mail they are receiving contains a letter explaining that they have won a prize/money, or have been chosen to participate in some event where they will receive a small fee for their participation.

Often a check will be enclosed with the business name on it. The check appears valid and legitimate if it is deposited. The letter further directs the recipient to deposit the check, then purchase 'Green Dot Cards' which are prepaid credit cards. The company requests that those cards be mailed to them, and the recipient keeps the rest of the money that was deposited. After the victims have cashed the check, mailed the green dot cards and spent their earnings, the bank informs them that the check was not legitimate and the victim is out that money.

If you receive a check in the mail or a phone call requesting money, consider these points:

If this business is one known to you, verify their information by contacting a number for them. Do not assume that the number the caller provides is an accurate one.

Most utility companies will not request that you pay in cash or with a pre paid card.

If you have not contacted the company before, it is highly likely that you will be the victim of a scam if you participate. If it appears too good to be true, it usually is.

If you have not heard of the business or company before, get to know everything about the company. Contact the Better Business Bureau, your local police department, your bank or an attorney.

Do not rely on the information given in the letter. Often times the suspects may be using the name of a legitimate company, using stolen checks or checking account numbers, or using an untraceable but legitimate phone number. Once the suspects have your information, they will not stop calling and may even threaten you and your family with criminal charges or civil lawsuits until you provide them with the money.

Verify all of the information before sending any money. If the caller or individual is purporting to be a family member, contact additional family to determine their location.

If you have any questions, please contact Officer Lesley Donaghy, Grants Pass Department of Public Safety Crime Prevention Bureau at 450-6245.