

# Fire Lines

News from Greater Brighton Fire

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## Letter From The Chief

Dear Resident:

Thank you for taking the time to read our first edition of Fire Lines. I hope that you find the information presented to be educational and interesting. A significant priority of the Fire District is to work to prevent fires and other emergencies from occurring. Reaching out to our residents with important information about accident and fire prevention is the main purpose of this newsletter.

In addition, you may not know much about the Fire District. This is an opportunity for us to provide you with information about the District and our efforts to continually address the needs of the community. As you are well aware, the past five years has been a time of

tremendous growth for this area. As a result, we have also grown in order to provide and maintain a high level of service.

The Fire District operates from five fire stations with 45 career firefighters and 30 volunteer reserves. The Fire District consists of 164 square miles with an estimated population of 60,000. Both full-time and reserve staff are highly trained professionals who are committed to your safety and well-being.

Please visit our web page at [www.gbfpd.org](http://www.gbfpd.org) to learn more about us. Or, stop by any



Fire Chief Mark Bodane

fire station and the firefighters will be happy to show you around and answer any questions you may have. We are here for you!

Mark A. Bodane  
Fire Chief

## Can you find matches in your home?...your kids can...

Every year in the U.S. there are more than 35,000 child set fires. Approximately 8,000 of those are set in homes and children make up 15-20% of all fire related deaths. Sadly, most of those children die in fires they set themselves.

**What is firesetting?**  
Curiosity about fire is

natural and expected. Hiding and setting fires is not. There are several categories of firesetting, these are:

- \*Curiosity-the most common. Curiosity coupled with limited knowledge of the dangers of fire.
- \*Crisis-setting fires as a cry for help
- \*Delinquent-setting fires to get attention

\*Strategic-usually in trouble at school or home, setting fires to be accepted by peers  
\*Pathological-the seasoned firesetter, has set many fires and has not been caught.

Firesetting, even at the curiosity level should be taken seriously. If you think your child needs to talk to someone about firesetting, call Brighton Fire at 303-659-4101.

## Candles, their *light* and *dark* side By Fire Marshal, Kris Krengel

Candles have been used throughout history for religious, calming, romantic, and scenting purposes in addition to providing light in times of darkness. Unfortunately, candles have a dark side that includes property loss, injury, and death.

In 2004, the latest year for which statistics are currently available, an estimated 17,200 home structure fires started by candles were reported to local fire departments. These fires resulted in over 200 deaths, 1,540 injuries, and direct property loss of \$200 million. The number of home structure fires has increased nearly two and one half times since 1990. The winter months bracketing the holidays saw the largest number of candle related home structure fires during the period 2000 – 2004, with December having almost twice the number of home candle fires of an average month.



*Candles, if used improperly can be deadly and costly*

The Greater Brighton Fire Protection District has seen its share of home candle fires. During 2001, over half of all home structure fires we fought were found to have been started by candles. Like so many other things, it is not the candles that cause the fire; it is human behavior when using them. Please follow these simple safety tips when using candles in your home:

- Extinguish all candles when leaving the room or going to sleep; never leave burning candles unattended.
- Keep candles at least one foot away from things that can

catch fire, like clothing, books, decorations, and curtains.

- Use candle holders that are sturdy, won't tip over easily, are made from a material that cannot burn, and are large enough to collect all of the dripping wax.
- Keep candles and all open flames away from flammable liquids.
- Keep wicks trimmed to one-quarter inch and extinguish taper and pillar candles when they get to within two inches of the holder. Votives and containers should be extinguished before the last half-inch of wax begins to melt.
- During power outages, never carry a lit candle; use flashlights.
- Avoid using candles in bedrooms and sleeping areas; this is where the largest number of fires resulting in the most fatalities occurs.
- Keep candles, matches and lighters out of the reach of children and pets.

***“Like so many other things, it’s not the candles that cause the fire, it’s human behavior.”***

## Be ready for any emergency, prepare a 72-hour kit

An emergency can be anything from a natural disaster to a terrorist attack. If something happened today, would you and your family be able to survive for at least 72-hours on what you have on hand? If your answer is no, you should think about preparing a 72-hour kit.

The following is a basic list of items that should be in your kit:

- Water - one gallon per person per day
- Food - enough non-perishable food for your whole family for at least 3 days
- Clean air-mask or something that would fit snugly over your mouth and nose, plastic sheeting and duct tape to seal windows
- Flashlight and battery powered radio as well as extra batteries (rotate batteries periodically to make sure they'll work when you need them)
- 1st Aid Kit
- Utility knife

- Can opener
- Toilet paper, soap, garbage bags and other sanitary supplies
- Infant formula and diapers as well
- Pet food and water for your pets

Some things to think about when putting your kit together are climate. If something should happen in the middle of winter and there was no electricity or heat, you would want to make sure you have coats, hats, gloves and warm clothes and blankets enough for your whole family.

Also think about the unique needs of your family. Are there any special medications that someone in the family has to take that would be unavailable during a disaster?



*Have your kit ready to go on a moments notice*

For more information on making a 72-hour kit, go to [www.readycolorado.org](http://www.readycolorado.org) or call Brighton Fire at 303-659-

## Are your children safe in the car?

Is your child still in a carseat? If not should he/she be?

Here are some tips to help you determine if your child is as safe as he or she can be while traveling in the car.

Colorado State Law is as follows:

★ Infants must ride in a rear-facing seat until they are at least 1 year **and** 20 lbs. *Safety advocates recommend children continue to be rear-facing as long as possible up to 30 lbs.*

★ Children 1-4 years who weigh 20-40 lbs must be restrained in a forward-facing car seat. *Safety Advocates recommend restraining your child in a 5-point harness until they are at least 40 lbs.*

★ Children over 40 lbs who are less than 6 years old must continue to ride in a child



*The proper seat, and the proper installation will keep your child safer*

restraint, such as a booster seat (unless they are 55" tall). *Safety Advocates recommend keeping your child in a booster until they are 57" tall.*

★ Children between 6-16 years old must be restrained in a seat belt.

★ All passengers in a vehicle should be belted or restrained in some manner.

If you are unsure if your child is in a proper seat or if you would like to have a Certified Carseat Technician check your seat for proper installation please call Dawn Blunt at 303-659-4101 to schedule an appointment. We'll go over proper fit techniques and make sure your child is as safe as he/she can be.

## Keep your family safe this winter

As the weather turns colder, you should be thinking about what needs to be done to keep your family safe this winter. First, you should check all your smoke alarms and make sure they all have fresh batteries if you have not done so recently.

You should also have your furnace checked by a professional. If you have a fire place, you should have it swept once a year to remove the buildup of soot that can cause smoke to come back into your home.

As the holidays near, you should also think about your holiday decorations.

\*Make sure that your strings

of lights do not have any broken bulbs and that you can not see any bare wires. If you find either of these problems, do not use that string of lights.

\*Also, if you are going to put lights outside your home, make sure that any you use are designed to be used outdoors.

\*Never leave Christmas tree lights on all night long, especially if you have a real tree. Turn them off, and unplug them at night.

thought about your dryer vent during a snowstorm? Last year we got enough snow that your dryer vent was more than likely blocked by snow. If we get snow high enough to block your dryer vent, clear a space for the hot air to escape. Otherwise, the trapped hot air could start a fire.

Finally, make sure you don't over do it when shoveling snow. Our early and late snowfalls can be very wet and heavy. Take your time clearing your driveway and/or sidewalk so you don't injure

Have you

***As the weather gets colder, think about what needs to be done around your house...chimney sweeping, get your furnace checked, and be prepared for snow.***

## Does your family have an escape plan?

Escape planning and smoke detectors go hand in hand. What is the first thing your family will do when they hear the smoke detector go off? In a recent survey, only 8% of families said their first reaction would be to get out of their home.

If your smoke detectors are working properly, you are 1/2 way to getting out of your home in a fire.

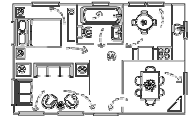
As a family you should sit down and draw a map of your home. On that map, mark all smoke detectors, mark 2 exits from every room, mark a place to meet outside and the closest telephone. Together, check the exits from bedrooms. If the second exit is a window, can it be reached? Can it be opened? Can someone get safely to the ground? Make sure your children know that if they are on a 2nd story or higher and they cannot go

through their bedroom door, they need to go to their window and throw out toys and other things to make a large pile below their windows. This gives firefighters the signal that someone is in that room when they arrive, even if they don't see someone.

Make plans for babies and toddlers in the family, early warning from a smoke detector is key in making sure you have time to get babies and toddlers out safely.

Once you have this planned, practice going through it. One person should set off an alarm while the rest of the family are in bedrooms. Everyone should practice getting out by crawling low to the ground and then meeting at the designated meeting place. Note: Your meeting place should be away from the house such as a mail box or tree and in the front of your home where you can make contact with fire personnel when they arrive.

If you need help planning an escape route or have questions about this, call 303-659-4101.



*Having an escape plan can save precious time during a fire*

Greater Brighton  
Fire Protection District

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Phone: 303-659-4101  
Fax: 303-659-4103  
Email: [comments@gbfpd.org](mailto:comments@gbfpd.org)

*Fast Fact: Our name is Greater Brighton Fire and not just Brighton Fire because we serve an area of 162 square miles that expands to areas greater than just the Brighton city limits.*

We're on the web!

[www.gbfpd.org](http://www.gbfpd.org)



## A word from Board President Julie Blair

Since last year, much has happened in your Fire District. After the passage of the mill levy increase in 2006, the Fire District addressed the three main issues presented in that request: Raised the wages of the firefighter staff to comparable area standards, hired additional firefighters, and purchased new fire equipment. All of this will allow us to continue meeting the needs of our residents now and into the future.

## Why so much training? *By Division Chief Phil Beehler*

The Greater Brighton Fire Protection District's Training Division provides education for over 75 firefighters. Our goal is to provide the best training to your firefighters.

A better trained firefighter is able to give the customer, you, the service that they deserve.

We believe that you are valued customer who deserves the best.

The firefighters meet at the Fire District Station #52 (Firehouse Road and Bridge Street) on three separate days per month. They study basic firefighting skills, how to drive and oper-

ate the fire trucks, continuing medical education and how to be better at their job.

The Training Division provides a basic Fire Academy for our new recruits and "Live Fire" training annually. We are able to provide a majority of a firefighter's education within the District, but we do send firefighters for trainings by other Fire Districts.

The Training Division also teaches firefighters from other Fire Departments and Districts as well.



**Crews practice filling a dump tank. This would be used in an area without hydrants.**