

# Creating a Safe and Healthy Home Checklist

Everyone should have a safe and healthy home environment. The checklist below is a tool for creating and maintaining a healthy home environment and shows some key action steps to take in each room of the home.

## Family Room

- Keep room clean from dust
- Keep floors vacuumed
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide alarms with working batteries
- Keep floors clear of electrical cords and clutter
- Do not smoke or allow smoking in the home
- Keep plug protectors inserted in unused electrical outlets

## Kitchen

- Check for water leaks under sink
- Keep pot handles on the stove turned inward facing the back burner
- Keep cleaning supplies stored separately from food and out of children's reach
- Keep appliance cords away from the sink and stove
- Keep sharp objects out of reach of children or in a cabinet with a safety latch
- Use baits, such as gel, and traps as a way to remove pests like cock-roaches, mice, and rats from a home instead of using pesticides

## Adult Bedroom

- Keep medication stored in locked drawers or cabinets
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in the hallway outside the bedroom with working batteries
- Keep bed coverings and sheets washed on a regular basis in hot water
- Keep rooms free of chipped paint and dust
- Keep fire sources, such as portable heaters, away from the bed and other flammable materials

## Nursery/Child Bedroom

- Use a safety approved crib and mattress covered by a fitted sheet
- Place baby on his/her back to sleep
- Make sure the crib, playpen, or bed is not near the window
- Keep toys, soft objects and loose bedding out of the baby's sleep area
- Keep rooms free of chipped paint and dust
- Keep plug protectors inserted in unused electrical outlets
- Keep cords from blinds and shades out of reach of children or use cordless blinds and shades
- Keep room clean from dust
- Keep floors vacuumed

## **Bathroom**

- Bathtubs and showers should have a non-skid bathmat on the tub/shower floor
- Use mats with non-slip rubber backs on bathroom floors
- Install grab bars next to the bathtub and shower
- Clean up moisture and mold safely
- Keep prescriptions and over-the-counter medications locked away from children and use childproof caps
- Keep small electrical appliances, such as hair dryers, curling irons, or shavers, away from water in sinks or tubs
- Supervise infants and children while bathing

## **Utility and Laundry Areas**

- Set hot water heater at 120°F to prevent burns
- Change furnace filter regularly
- Have gas appliances and furnaces checked yearly to make sure they do not release extra carbon monoxide
- Make sure the clothes dryer vents outside
- Test for radon, if there's a high level, hire a specialist to eliminate the hazard

## **Outer Part of House and Yard**

- Fix holes, cracks, and leaks on exterior of the house
- Keep trash can covered with a lid
- Keep small bodies of water from accumulating outside
- Keep paint and tools stored safely in garage or storage room
- Keep all products in original containers; never place kerosene, anti-freeze, paints or solvents in utensils customarily used for food or drinks
- Install handrails on both sides of the stairs
- Attach non-slip rubber stair treads on stairs to reduce falls
- Maintain gutters, downspouts, and roof to prevent moisture from entering the home
- Seal gaps around roofing and attic opening to keep rodents and insects out
- Be prepared for an emergency: have a first aid kit and 3 day supply of food
- Plan a fire escape route



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### **Resource:**

The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Promote Healthy Homes (2009) A Healthy Home Checklist. Retrieved on February 15, 2011, from the Office of the Surgeon General: [www.surgeneral.gov/topic/healthyhomes/index.html](http://www.surgeneral.gov/topic/healthyhomes/index.html)