

Medical Oxygen Fire Safety Fact Sheet



Keeping medical oxygen in the home can be a significant fire hazard.

Common products people use as part of their daily routine are dangerous around oxygen equipment. This includes self-care products like petroleum jelly, lotions, face creams and hair products. The majority are oil based and can't be used around medical oxygen.

Anything flammable will burn at a higher temperature with oxygen equipment present. Medical oxygen saturates fabric covered furniture, clothing, hair and bedding, increasing the speed and intensity of a fire.

Most oxygen related fires are caused by:

- Smoking materials such as tobacco and non-tobacco smoking products including electronic cigarettes.
- Electrical heat sources and electrical devices.
- Candles, stoves, matches, woodstoves or any device with an open flame.
- Aerosol sprays containing combustible materials.

There is no safe way to smoke in the home when oxygen equipment is present. Any kind of smoking product should never be used around medical oxygen. Posting a NO SMOKING sign at the entrance to your home and one in the room where oxygen equipment is operated or stored is the best way to reduce the risk of fire.

Candles, stoves, matches, woodstoves or anything that uses any open flame should also not be present in a home where oxygen equipment is used. Aerosol sprays must also not be present. There is no safe distance that allows for these items to be used in the residence with oxygen equipment.

Electrical heat sources and electrical devices can be used in the home safely with medical oxygen equipment present. However, these appliances must be used with caution. Keep oxygen cylinders at least 1.5 metres from anything that can fuel or start a fire.

For further information on what can be used safely in the home with medical oxygen, please contact your local fire department.