

Conduct frequent fire drills

California code requires schools to conduct regularly scheduled fire drills, at intervals based on grade level, as follows:

- *Elementary = monthly*
- *Intermediate/middle school = semiannually*
- *Secondary = semiannually*

Prevent school arson

SIA has an arson-prevention video available to member districts. This informational video is designed to educate and assist school sites in reducing the opportunities for arson.



WeTip^{inc.}
WWW.WETIP.COM
1-800-78-CRIME

The services of WeTip, an anonymous crime-reporting hotline, are available to SIA members. Students, staff and community members can call WeTip to report any information on crimes committed against schools. The WeTip hotline system is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Schools Insurance Authority

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Sacramento, CA 95827-6710
(916) 364-1281
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Stay Fire-Safe in the Classroom

Fire prevention keeps teaching and learning on track



School fires are devastating. They impact people as well as property, both in monetary terms and by disrupting student learning experiences. Recovering from school fires siphons money from classrooms and school budgets, and compromises the education that kids need to succeed.

You can help keep schools fire-free by following these guidelines:

Decorations and Displays: Less is more

Classroom decorations and displays must conform to fire regulations and follow these guidelines:

- Materials cannot block or conceal exit doors, exit lights, electrical outlets, fire alarms or fire extinguishers.
- Materials must be 4 feet from room exits and corners.
- Materials cannot be located overhead or hang from ceilings. In addition to fire concerns, hanging materials can cause motion sensors to activate.
- Curtains, drapes, holiday decorations and trees, and any other combustible decorative materials should be fire-resistant. When bringing items into the school environment, school staff must provide the site administrator with appropriate documentation of fire-retardancy.
- A maximum of 25 percent of the wall surface of a classroom can consist of non-treated materials.
- **Lighted candles are never permitted in classrooms.**



Curb the cords

Providing enough electrical outlets is an ongoing challenge for schools. Unfortunately, many fires have been caused by overused outlets and the improper use of extension cords and power taps. A power tap is a device with a flexible cord and a male connector at one end, and receptacles with a built-in overcurrent protector at the other.



It's important that all school personnel adhere to the following:

- Use *only* power taps with overcurrent protection.
- Never plug a power tap into another power tap, creating a chain.
- Power taps cannot be longer than 8 feet.
- Power taps must be Underwriter Laboratories (UL)-listed.
- Follow the manufacturer's guidelines pertaining to amperage.
- All power taps are considered temporary. They must not be affixed to structures, extended through walls, ceilings or floors, run under doors, or subjected to environmental damage or physical impact.
- Never use power taps for appliances, such as refrigerators, microwaves and coffee pots. These appliances must be plugged directly into outlets.

Lighten the storage load

Excessive storage is a fire hazard. It also contributes to indoor air-quality issues and makes it difficult for site custodians to properly clean and maintain the rooms. Take the time to reduce the amount of combustible material in classrooms. Anything stored on high shelves or cabinets must have 24 inches of clearance from the top of the item to the ceiling. If there are fire sprinklers in the rooms, the allowed clearance is 18 inches.

Get to know your fire extinguishers

Learn to use a fire extinguisher. Any local fire department or fire extinguisher vendor can assist. In addition, follow these guidelines:

- Mount extinguishers on walls between 3.5 feet and 5 feet from handle to floor, and within 3 feet of exit doors.
- Keep extinguishers close at hand, or accessible within a radius of 75 feet.
- Maintain signage that shows the location of each classroom extinguisher.
- Have extinguishers checked monthly to ensure that they are fully charged.

