

## Environmental Risk Assessment Checklist

Assess the risk your clutter presents:

- to you
- to other residents
- to pets
- to responders

Are there blocked entrances or exits

- to your home? You must have two clear (entirely unobstructed) ways to enter or exit your residence in case of an emergency.
- to any rooms, especially where rooms are in current and regular use?

Is there accumulation near ignition sources?

- furnaces
- stoves
- space heaters
- baseboard heaters
- portable heaters
- water heaters
- uncovered light bulbs
- other combustible items (things that will conduct heat or burn)
- electrical panel (circuit breaker or fuse box): if wiring is old, check amperage of *all* fuses regularly and take blown fuses seriously (take proactive action to prevent)

Are any extension cords in semipermanent or permanent use?

- Ideally rooms should be reorganized so that all electrical devices can be plugged directly into wall outlets (check the integrity of *all* cords).
- Extension cords should not be used in place of an adequate number of permanently wired electrical outlets connected to the main electrical panel. All electrical work should be done by qualified electricians
- Electrical cords are a serious tripping hazard and vulnerable to vermin chewing them and starting fires.

Do you have

- nonfunctional or too few smoke detectors? (Consult your local fire department for enforceable standards in your area.)
- nonfunctional or too few carbon monoxide detectors, where legislated, given heat sources and degree of accumulation?

Remember:

- Accumulation must be removed from all heat and ignition sources.
- Blocked or obstructed stairs must be cleared.
- Consider whether an expert needs to access the situation based on what you are seeing.

The bottom line is, you must:

- consult your local fire department for enforceable standards in your area;
- have two clear (entirely unobstructed) ways to enter or exit your residence in case of emergency;

- ensure clear routes into and out of each room;
- make sure all areas near heat and ignition sources (e.g., furnaces, stoves, portable heaters, baseboard heaters, water heaters, and uncovered light bulbs) are clear (entirely unobstructed) of combustible items (i.e., things that will conduct heat or burn);
- avoid using extension cords in place of an adequate number of permanently wired electrical outlets connected to the main electrical panel; and
- confirm that smoke detectors are functioning and that you have enough of them placed correctly (consult your local fire department about smoke detector requirements in your area).