



Vehicle Fires Are Dangerous.

Vehicle fires are a little recognized fire safety problem. However, every year an average of 500 people lose their lives and anywhere from 2,700 to 3,700 civilians and firefighters are injured from

motor vehicle fires. Automotive fires are a common and deadly occurrence with 25% (200,000 to 300,000 a year) of all reported fires taking place in motor vehicles.

EACH YEAR 500 PEOPLE LOSE THEIR LIVES TO VEHICLE FIRES.

Built To Burn!

Most vehicles are constructed with highly flammable, synthetic materials. Potentially deadly, toxic gases from burning plastic and other materials are emitted during a vehicle fire. Additionally, vehicle fires emit carbon monoxide, a colorless, tasteless, odorless gas that is deadly in high concentrations.

Many vehicle parts can burst or explode during a fire. Bumpers, door struts, tire rims, wheels, drive shafts, axles, seals and engine parts can shoot out from the vehicle, becoming deadly shrapnel.

A motor vehicle fire can generate heat in excess of 1500°F. Sometimes, flames from a burning vehicle can shoot out over 10 feet. The heat and fire from a burning vehicle can cause fatal or debilitating injuries.

Although rare, vehicle gas tanks may rupture and spread flammable fuel around the vehicle. In some cases, gas tanks have been known to explode.



When firefighters respond to a vehicle fire they wear full protective fire resistant equipment and breathing apparatus in an effort to keep them safe. Ordinary citizens don't have access to this kind of safety equipment. If your vehicle catches on fire you need to use extreme caution and follow safety guidelines.

Protect yourself and your loved ones from the dangers of vehicle fires.

Always properly maintain your vehicle and investigate anything mechanically out of the ordinary.

For more information on vehicle fire safety, contact your local fire department.

Automotive Fire SAFETY





What Can You Do to Prevent Vehicle Fires?

75% of all motor vehicle fires start in the engine or wheel areas.

Reduce your chances of experiencing a motor vehicle fire with the following prevention tips:



Check your engine for leaks and cracks in hoses, gaskets and fittings regularly.

Catalytic converters are a part of the engine's exhaust system and generate a lot of heat. Be aware of where your vehicle's catalytic converter is located and be careful not to park the vehicle over combustible materials may come into contact with it.

Regularly check the vehicle's engine coolant levels. Try to keep the coolant level full at all times.

Properly maintain your vehicle according to the manufacturer's specifications. If you notice any changes in fuel consumption or performance, have the vehicle checked out by a qualified mechanic.



Do not ignore strange smells coming from the car. If you ever smell something burning while the vehicle is running, investigate it at once.

Keep the inside of the vehicle clean and free of trash, paper or empty food containers that could combust. Frequently empty ashtrays and close all ashtrays when not being used. Never leave cigarette lighters in a vehicle where small children can access them.

Make sure that the grill of the car is kept clean and free of debris. Also inspect the exhaust system and clear any blockages or material that might catch on fire.



What Should You Do if Your Vehicle Catches on Fire?

- If the hood or dash of the vehicle begins to smoke, pull over immediately as fires in the electrical system can quickly spread and disable the vehicle's power steering and braking systems. Once you've come to a stop, place the vehicle in "Park" and shut off the ignition. Turning off the ignition shuts off the vehicle's fuel pump and prevents additional fuel from reaching the fire.
- Everyone should evacuate the vehicle and remain a safe distance away. If the vehicle is in a garage, exit the vehicle and the structure at once. Do not reenter or approach the vehicle for any reason. Always maintain a safe distance.
- Once a safe distance away, contact emergency services by calling 9-1-1 or your local fire department's emergency number. Calmly, clearly report the nature of the incident and give the operator the exact location of the vehicle. Remain on the phone until the operator gives you the okay to hang up.
- If you have a fire extinguisher, never place yourself in danger in an attempt to use it. If you do attempt to use a fire extinguisher, maintain a safe distance from the vehicle and ensure that nothing is blocking your escape in the event that something goes wrong.
- When using a fire extinguisher, make sure it is approved for class "C" and class "B" fires. Stick the nozzle of the extinguisher through the grill of the vehicle and spray the engine area thoroughly. Then move back a safe distance from the vehicle and wait for the fire department to arrive.
- Never open the hood or trunk of a burning vehicle. Opening the hood or trunk can let air rush in, causing the fire to "flash over" which may lead to serious injury.

Through proper vehicle maintenance and prevention, and knowing the correct emergency procedures, you can protect yourself and your loved ones from the dangers of vehicle fires.

