

Safety in the Garage

- Install a fire extinguisher, especially if your garage is attached to the house. At a minimum, the rating should be 2-A: 10-B:C although due to the volume of flammable liquids in garages, a larger extinguisher is recommended.
- Always store propane tanks outside your home.
- Don't store any flammable liquids (turpentine, mineral spirits, varnishes, camp stove fuels, etc.) in your home or attached garage. Store these away from appliances, heaters, pilot lights and other sources of heat or flame.
- Store gasoline outside your home or in a detached garage or shed in a well-ventilated area, and keep it in an approved container. Use it only as a motor fuel - never as a cleaning agent.
- Store oil-based paints and other flammable liquids in their original containers with tight-fitting lids.
- Never smoke near flammable liquids.
- Never keep a car running in a garage. Even if the garage doors are open, normal circulation will not provide enough fresh air to reliably prevent the dangerous buildup of carbon monoxide which can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning. This is especially important if the garage is attached to your home.

Remember:

Properly maintained vehicles are rarely involved in fire. Although many vehicle owners are capable of simple maintenance jobs, more complex service and repair work is best left to qualified automotive mechanics.



Vehicle Fires



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**San Bernardino County
Fire Department**
Community Safety Division

What You Need to Know

Automobiles, trucks, and other motor vehicles are made of many synthetic materials that emit toxic gases that can be harmful even deadly when they burn. A main by-product of fire is a lethal concentration of carbon monoxide, which is a colorless, odorless, and tasteless gas. A vehicle fire can generate heat upwards of 1500° Fahrenheit; Keep in mind that water boils at 212° Fahrenheit, and that most foods are cooked at temperatures less than 500° Fahrenheit.

Flames from burning vehicles can often shoot out distances of 10 feet or more depending on the element involved. Any part of the vehicle can burst because of heat, shooting debris great distances endangering anyone standing near the vehicle. Vehicle fires may also cause air bags to deploy. Although relatively rare, gas tanks of motor vehicles can rupture and spray flammable fuel, posing a clear potential for serious injury. In even more extraordinary instances, gas tanks have been known to explode. Hazardous Materials such as battery acid, antifreeze, or even oil can cause injury. Vehicle fires are so dangerous that firefighters wear full protective gear and self-contained breathing apparatus to keep themselves safe. They also have the ability to quickly put out vehicle fires with large amounts of water or other extinguishing agents. You don't have these safety advantages so use extra precaution. Any vehicle can be replaced-human beings cannot.



If case of fire, what should you do?

On the road:

- Signal and move to the right, get onto the shoulder or breakdown lane.
- Stop and shut the engine off immediately.
- Get yourself and any other person out of the vehicle. Get as far away as possible and STAY AWAY.
- When you are at a safe distance CALL 9-1-1 and tell them the location and type of fire.
- If possible warn oncoming traffic.
- Do not attempt to put out the fire yourself. Unseen hazards can emerge leaving you unprepared and in greater danger.

Parked or in traffic:

- Shut off the engine.
- Get yourself and any others out of the vehicle. If the vehicle is in a garage or other structure, exit immediately.
- After you are a safe distance away, call the fire department at 9-1-1. Tell them the location of the fire.
- Remain away from the vehicle: do not attempt to get back into a burning vehicle to retrieve personal property. Warn pedestrians and other vehicles to stay away.
- Never put yourself in danger using a fire extinguisher.
- If you suspect a fire do not open the hood; air could rush in, enlarging the fire, leading to injury.

Remember to think and act quickly in the safest way possible during any emergency.

Did You Know?

- Nearly 1 out of 5 fires are motor vehicles.
- 1 out of 8 fire deaths are a result from motor vehicle fires.
- Approximately 600 people die yearly as a result of a motor vehicle fires.
- 2600 civilians and 1200 fire fighters are injured yearly by motor vehicle fires.

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FINDINGS

- Mechanical or design problems are the leading cause of vehicle fires.
- Electrical wiring and fuel are the leading forms of material ignited in vehicle fires.
- Fires following a collision contribute to vehicle deaths.
- On average there are between 200,000 and 348,000 motor vehicle fires yearly in the U.S.
- A motor vehicle fire happens approximately every 90 seconds.



Flying debris