

Fire Safety

2012 HDT Rally

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RV Fire Statistics

- Difficult to identify good data
- About 10,000 RV fires per year. (6500-20,000 reported range)
- About HALF of the fires are while parked. (*RV Alliance America*)
- 70% start in engine compartments.
- 20% are tire or brake fires. And these are usually undetected until too late.
- 25% of RV fires are in the 12-volt electrical system. (*National Interstate*)



Prevention

- Obvious things
 - Don't use cooktop to heat with !
 - Keep portable heaters away from flammables
 - Don't leave things on the stove unattended
 - Don't leave your electric fireplace on unattended
- Maybe not so obvious.....
 - Make sure your shore power cord is undamaged
 - Tighten electrical box, generator, inverter and transfer switch lugs yearly
 - Check battery lug torque during battery maintenance
 - Make SURE you have a catastrophe fuse on inverter/battery line
 - Don't use cheap electric heaters – use ceramic heaters
 - Properly service your furnace and refrigerator (“out of sight – out of mind”)
 - Make sure you have good tires, brakes, bearings

Detection

- Smoke, propane and carbon monoxide detectors need testing – they may not work!
- Replace detectors after 5 years. Test function does not guarantee proper operation.
- Make sure you use RV approved smoke detectors – they are different than residential ones.
- Mac McCoy recommends the dual-sensor, battery-operated smoke alarm by Kidde, which uses both photoelectric and ionization sensors. This detects smoldering fires better.

Detection

- Use tire monitors – many fires start from undetected blown tires
- Experts say that in an RV you have 90 seconds before the fire is uncontrollable. You must be able to knock it down fast.

Get OUT of the RV and STAY OUT!!!

Firefighting

Extinguishers

- Extinguisher classes
 - Class A: ordinary combustibles like paper
 - Class B: flammable liquids like gas, oil
 - Class C: electrical
- RVs require class B:C
- Better for all extinguishers to be class A:B:C
- Common RV extinguisher is a dry chemical; a “foam” extinguisher is better (wetting agents)
- Look at *ColdFire* and *FireAde 2000* extinguishers that use advanced suppression agents
- Extinguisher source
 - Mac McCoy <http://www.macthefireguy.com>

Firefighting

Extinguishers

- Have a minimum of three extinguishers
 - Kitchen area
 - Bedroom
 - Outside compartment (unlocked)
 - Truck DOT compliant extinguisher (in truck)
- Maintain your extinguishers; pressure, date, settling
- Need an advanced extinguisher for tire/brake fires – outside compartment extinguisher (ColdFire or FireAde)

Firefighting Refrigerators

- There are MANY fires
- They are hard to detect before serious damage
- IMO you need automatic extinguishing
- We use a halon extinguisher that deploys at 165*
- ColdFire would be equally effective



This fire caused \$100,000 of damage to a \$600,000 coach

Halon Extinguisher



Halon Extinguisher



Other Preparation

- Escape plan and discussion
- Have you opened your bedroom escape window?
- Can you climb out? Can you get to the ground?
- Are you sure of where your extinguishers are?
- Quick connects on hoses; spare hose for water-down.
- Grab bag? Duplicate some items and store in truck?
- Medication – keep a couple day supply outside rig....
- Important papers in fireproof safe? Copies of drivers license? Scanned and offsite storage in “cloud”?
- If driving, can you “separate” your rig or toad FAST? Does your equipment operate easily? Can you act as a team?