

# Fall Open House Keeps Fire Safety Top of Mind

By Jennifer Wake

As the air turns chilly, and rain begins to fall, there's nothing quite like the warmth and comfort you can get by bundling up in front of a roaring fire. But according to the Moraga-Orinda Fire District, when fireplaces and woodstoves are not properly maintained or used incorrectly, the result can be devastating.

Before your first fire of the season, be sure your chimney has been inspected and cleaned by professionals in the past two years if it used often, the District says,

with home flues for wood burning stoves inspected once a year.

"Since high flames burning hot will burn clean, and clean fires have leave little creosote and resin, open the draft wide," the District suggests on its Web site. "Make sure that your chimney has a spark arrestor or wire basket on the top of the chimney, always use fireplace screens or glass doors, and never the door of a wood burning stove open unless there is a screen or glass door backup."

Simple tips like cleaning

ashes out of the fireplace or stove regularly (keeping in mind that ashes can remain hot for days after a fire), never leaving a fire unattended, having a fire extinguisher accessible that you know how to use, and making sure there are working smoke detectors in your home can help to ensure an enjoyable and safe fall season.

Lamorinda residents can get the latest information on emergency preparedness and fire safety from firefighters at the Moraga-Orinda Fire District's annual Fall



Open House at Fire Station 41 (1280 Moraga Way in Moraga) on Saturday, Oct. 20 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Residents can also take a peek at the fire fighting equipment, the engines, and ambulance.



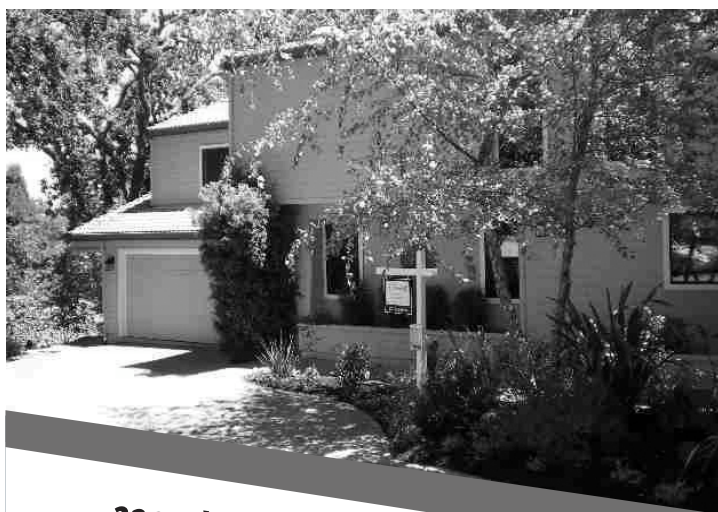
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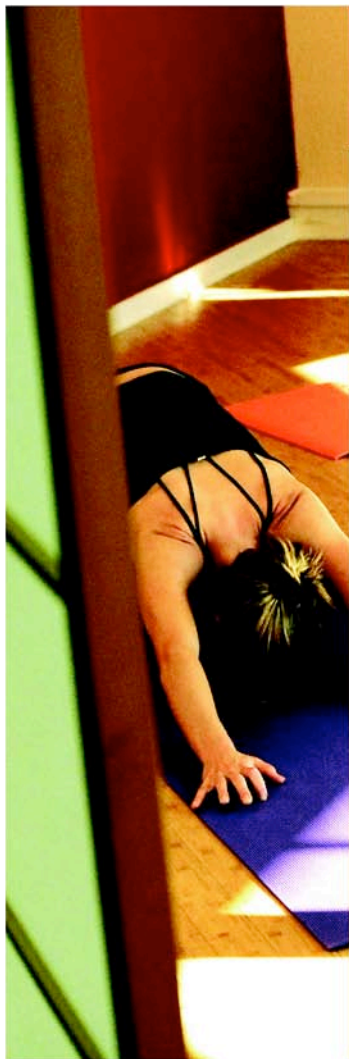
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