



LET'S TALK FIRE SAFETY

Valdosta Fire Department

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Hoarding

Hording Facts:

Hoarding is defined as collecting or keeping large amounts of various items in the home due to a strong urge to save them. Hoarding also occurs when one experiences distress when they have to discard items.

Unfortunately, the home is so over-loaded with possessions that everyday living is compromised.

Hoarding can be a fire hazard. Many occupants die in fires in homes occupied by hoarders.

Local Statistics

In recent years, VFD has responded to many calls for help in which they rec-

ognize citizens living in these conditions. We have had at least one fire death in our community because of this lifestyle.



Dealing with Hoarders

- Be respectful and show concern for the person's safety.
- Match the language of the person. Avoid using derogatory terms, such as "junk", "trash", or "hoarding."
- Focus on safety

issues, such as fires, fall hazards, and avalanche conditions

Always Remember

- Responding firefighters can be put at risk due to obstructed exits, falling objects, and excessive fire loading that can lead to collapse.
- Hoarding makes fighting fires and searching for occupants far more difficult .
- Those living adjacent to an occupied structure can be quickly affected when a fire occurs, due to excessive smoke and fire conditions.

National Fire Protection Association

<http://www.nfpa.org/public-education/by-topic/safety-in-the-home/hoarding-and-fire-safety>.

Photo courtesy of storeandmore.com

"We can fill our lives with 'stuff,' but as we do we're concurrently filling our lives with the obligation to maintain that 'stuff.'"

— **Craig D. Lounsbrough**

Did you know that the Valdosta Fire Department does offer fire and life safety classes. For more information about these classes, please contact Tangela Rowe at 229-333-1835.

Hoarding Task Forces are often made up of mental health providers, building representatives, community service providers, faith based organizations, the fire service, public health representatives, family members, and others.

Have a fire safety question you would like for the Fire Department to answer, please contact Tangela Rowe at 229-333-1835 or you can send an email valdostafire@valdostacity.com

Fire Safety Word Search

FYCBBTRAININGIKMICCUNUC
CNJDNMENTALHEALTHNIUB
BVFVBHBBVCLEANHOUSEKHI
CDHCECNVCBEUCJNOIHGJCJ
DCGVDDBCIUNCCEMERGENCY
DANGEROUSIEFOLISITUATION
CIUCUHCCOKCHOARDINGLEU
SINFESTATIONSVOBSIFAMILY
QWVYCDVDIFFICULTNHBPOZ

Fire Safety Quiz

1. Hoarding is not an illness and can be quickly rectified by simply cleaning up.
A. True
B. False
2. True hoarding behavior is actually fairly common, with anywhere from _____ percent of the general American population meeting diagnosis requirements.
A. 2 to 5
B. 7 to 10
C. 1 to 3
D. 9 to 15

Correct Answers: 1. B, 2. A



Freddie D. Broome, Fire Chief