

# What is a Healthy Home?

A healthy home is *designed, built, and maintained to support our health*. Home hazards are common: peeling paint may have lead, a lot of moisture can cause mold, and clutter can attract insects and rodents. Some deadly hazards are invisible, like carbon monoxide and radon.

## To Have a Healthy Home and Keep It Healthy, Pay Attention to the Whole Home.

- Use safe water – have a clean supply and set your water temperature at 120°F.
- Prevent moisture to keep out pests and keep paint intact.
- Replace old windows to reduce lead-based paint, save energy, and improve air flow.

## Action Steps for Bedrooms, Living Rooms, and Family Rooms

- Install smoke and carbon monoxide alarms on every floor and near all rooms where people sleep.
- Test smoke alarms monthly; change batteries every year. If you are a San Francisco resident age 65+, the **SF Fire Department** will give you a free smoke alarm. Call **(415) 734-2101** for more information.
- Do not smoke or allow anyone else to smoke in the home.
- If your home was built before 1978, test it for lead paint.
- Clean up clutter – it gives places for rodents and insects to nest.



## Keep Your Child Safe:

- Do not put soft objects or loose bedding such as pillows, quilts, bumper pads, or stuffed toys in a crib.
- Always put an infant on his/her back to sleep.
- Cords from window covers can strangle children. Use cordless blinds and shades or tie the cords out of reach of children.
- Place covers on electrical outlets.
- Do not keep guns in the home.

For more information call Customer Service at **(415) 615-4555**.  
Or visit **[www.healthysanfrancisco.org](http://www.healthysanfrancisco.org)**

## Action Steps for Kitchens

- Never use the stove or oven to heat the house.
- Use a range hood fan or other kitchen exhaust fan when cooking produces smoke.
- Never walk away from the stove while you are cooking.
- Don't wear clothes with long, loose fitting sleeves when cooking.
- Use safe cleaning products, and keep them locked up and away from curious children.
- Cleaning products can be safe when used as directed, but some cleaners are dangerous for a child to eat or drink even a small amount: bleach, detergent, oven cleaner, wood polish, shoe polish, and toilet and drain cleaners.
- Mold and pests can make asthma and other breathing problems worse. Stop cockroaches, ants, and mice without pesticides:
  - Keep them out – seal openings to the outside and between rooms.
  - Starve them – put away food, clean up, and cover the trash and garbage.
  - Deny them water – fix leaks and wipe up spilled water.
  - Use closed baits, traps, and gels only when necessary.
  - Limit use of bug bombs or foggers. They can be a serious health and safety hazard, especially if you use too many or don't follow directions.

## Action Steps for Bathrooms

- Use mats with nonslip rubber backs on floors. Keep medicine away from children: lock it in a medicine cabinet, and use childproof caps. If you have pain or anxiety medicine prescriptions, lock it where children or teenagers cannot find it (parents' medications are frequently drugs of abuse).
- Clean up moisture and mold safely, with a bleach and water mixture. Never mix bleach with ammonia or other cleaners. Open windows and doors to get fresh air.
- Use a bathroom exhaust fan that is vented outside. A fan that is not vented outside keeps moisture in the house.

**Be ready in case of disaster: have a kit for shelter in place and plan fire escape routes. With knowledge, having a healthy home is within everyone's reach. Get started today.**

Adapted from:

CDC guide, "A Healthy Home for Everyone,"  
[www.cdc.gov/healthyhomes/](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyhomes/)

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