



**Moving into 2021 how can we keep our homes and families safe and secure? What steps can we take to minimize risk and protect our property?**

This article will cover ideas and tips to help you start 2021 in a good position, properly preparing your home and how to monitor for issues!



**1. First and foremost, have a fire safety plan!!!**

Making sure that you have an escape route, fire extinguishers, and that you practice the plan! Repetition of the plan will ensure that if a fire does break out that your response is natural and immediate, you don't even think about it you just do! Including your children and other family members is a necessity as well, you want everyone on the same page and sure of their responsibilities!

2. During and after snow events make sure your sidewalks, porches and driveways are free and clear of snow and ice. This will reduce the chances of a slip and fall accident! It's important for not only your family to have a safe and clear path, but also for the mailperson, the paper person, your neighbors, and friends who may visit! You don't want anyone to fall and get hurt on your property, making sure to clear the path and use salt or sand to eliminate icy patches that can cause falls!

3. Maintain adequate home security. Whether that is using some type of system like Ring or Simpli-Safe or just making sure that your outdoor lighting is up to par and that all the bulbs are working. Making sure that you have a clear, safe path from where you park to where you enter the property is also important. If you must travel through an alleyway or dark pathway, add lighting! Eliminating places where you can be accosted without being seen is a must!

4. **Check your electrical!** This can be outlets, cords, your electrical panel, these should all be visually inspected on a regular basis. What are you looking for? Scorch marks, loose wires, damaged coatings (on cords and wires). What does that mean? It means that while the electrical may be working fine, an electrical fire is a possibility if those items are not repaired or replaced. You can go one step further if you have true concerns and have a licensed electrician inspect your system. They will be able to make any repairs for you immediately!

5. **Be Prepared!!!** Have the basic necessities in your home and easily accessible. Like a first aid kit, any medicines required to be taken by any family member, emergency contact numbers, inhalers, epi pens, water, emergency food and anything else that your family may consider a necessity.

