

Home Fire Prevention and Safety Tips.



Sometimes fires occur because of things beyond our control such as brush fires, or faulty electrical wiring, however, there are some things we can do to prevent fires. Some of these include:

- More than half of all fatal fires happen while people are sleeping. Install smoke detectors in strategic locations. Test every six months, and replace the batteries frequently.
- Draw a schematic escape plan for your house. Sketch out the two most probable escape routes from every room in the house. If the house is two stories, prepare drop-down ladders from the windows in case the stairs are blocked by fire. Mark with a cross the family meeting place on your home fire escape plan.
- Practice getting out of the house quickly so that it become second nature.
- Invest in a home chemical fire extinguisher. An extinguisher that has a rating of 2-A:10-B:C on its label is recommended for each floor level. Check and inspect on a regular basis to ensure that the chemical extinguishers are still safe to use.
- Consider including sprinkler systems in plans for new construction and installing them in existing homes.
- Never smoke in bed or when you are drowsy. Always check for smoldering cigarettes under cushions of couches and chairs. Blow out any burning candles if you leave the room.
- Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of curious children.
- Make sure TV's and stereos have space around them to prevent overheating.
- Keep space heaters and wood stoves at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn.
- Make sure wood-burning fires have been completely extinguished before leaving a room.
- Always turn off natural gas fire places when not in attendance. Always turn heaters off when you go to bed or go out.
- Use a metal screen on your fireplace.
- Have your chimney inspected once a year.
- Turn off the stove whenever you are not present in the kitchen. Never leave cooking unattended.
- Wear close-fitting sleeves when cooking.
- Do not pour hot oil into your garbage can, wait until it cools and place it in a safe metal or ceramic container for disposal.
- Never pour water on a grease fire. If a grease fire starts, carefully slide a lid over the pan to smother the flames, then turn off the burner.
- Store flammable materials outside or in a detached garage.
- Don't leave piles of debris in dry, sunny places.
- Keep flammable clothing and other items away from open flames or extreme heat sources.
- Avoid using fire-crackers and sparklers anywhere near dry flammable wood or grass.
- Do not store anything near the furnace or heater.
- Never store propane indoors. If you smell propane or natural gas, get out of the house right away and call for help.
- Immediately replace cracked or frayed electrical cords.
- Any electrical outlet near bathroom basins or kitchen and bar sinks should be protected by a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI). Contact a qualified electrician for installation

Fire Drills in the Home



Most residential fires occur between 8 p.m. and 8 a.m. Deaths from residential fires occur in greater numbers between midnight and 4 a.m. when most people are asleep. An average of 800 fires strike residential buildings each day in the United States. More than 6,500 persons die each year from fire - more than half of them children and senior citizens. The majority of these deaths are in home fires. People can survive even major fires in their homes if they get out quickly and stay out.

Rules for Survivors

- Install and maintain smoke detectors.
- Make an escape plan and practice it.
- Consider installing an automatic sprinkler system.

Plan Your Escape

- When a fire occurs, there is no time for planning. Sit down with your family today and make a step-by-step plan for escaping a fire.

Draw a floor-plan of your home..

- ..marking two (2) ways out of every room-- especially bedrooms.

Agree on a meeting place..

- ..outside your home where every member of the household will gather after escaping a fire to wait for the fire department. This allows you to count heads and inform the fire department if anyone is trapped inside the burning building.
- ..teach children what to do. They must not hide even if they are afraid.

Practice your escape plan..

- .. at least twice a year. Have a fire drill in your home. Appoint someone to be monitor and have everyone participate. A fire drill is not a race. Get out quickly, but carefully.

Make your exit drill realistic.

- Shout "Fire!" to alert the family.
- Pretend that some exits are blocked by fire and practice alternative escape routes. Pretend that the lights are out and that some escape routes are filling with smoke.

Call for Help .. Dial 9-1-1

- When there is fire or smoke or a serious medical emergency, it is appropriate to call 9-1-1. The operator will confirm the type of emergency, your location and will dispatch emergency personnel to your location. Make sure everyone knows the number. Even young children can be taught to remember to dial this number when there is an emergency. Explain to them how to use it and when to use it – so in an emergency, reaction is automatic.

Be Prepared!

- If you live in an apartment, be sure all doors and windows can be unlocked easily, even in the dark. Use the stairs to leave the building.
Never use an elevator during a fire; it may stop between floors or take you to a floor where the fire is burning.
- If you live in a two-story house, make sure everyone in the household can unlock all doors and windows quickly. If you must escape from a second-story window, be sure there is a safe way to reach the ground. Jumping from upper floors of a building should be avoided. However, it is possible to hang from a second story window and drop feet first to the ground without significant injury.
- Know how to drop and roll if you should catch fire. Adults and children alike should practice doing this.



Test doors before you open them

- While kneeling or crouching at the door, reach up as high as you can and touch the door, the knob, and the space between the door and its frame with the back of your hand. If the door is hot, use another escape route .. the window exit. If the door is cool, open it with caution.

If you are trapped,..

- ..close the doors between you and the fire .. it slows the spread of smoke, toxic gases and fire. Stuff the cracks around the doors to keep smoke out. If you are near a water source, wetting these will help even more. You should also cover your mouth and nose with something to filter out the smoke. Wait at a window and signal for help with a light-colored cloth or a flashlight. If there's a phone in the room, call the fire department and tell them exactly where you are.

Get everyone out fast...Don't stop for anything

- Do not try to rescue possessions or pets. Go directly to your meeting place, and then call the fire department from a neighbor's phone. Every member of your household should know how to call the fire department (dial 758-3232). Special provisions may be required for infants, young children, disabled or the elderly who may need additional help when escaping. These provisions should be included in the home fire escape plan and discussed with family members.

Crawl low under smoke

- Smoke contains deadly gases, and heat rises. Cleaner air will be near the floor. If you encounter smoke using your primary exit, use your alternative escape plan. If you must exit through smoke, crawl on your hands and knees, keeping your head 12 to 24 inches above the floor.

Stay Out!

- Once you are out of your home, don't go back for any reason. If people are trapped, the fire fighters have the best chance of rescuing them. The heat and smoke of a fire are overpowering. Fire fighters have the training, experience, and protective equipment needed to enter burning buildings.