

When Fire Strikes you must be ready to act. It only takes a few seconds for a small fire to grow out of control. Early detection from well-maintained smoke alarms and practicing a safe escape plan gives your family the best chance for survival.



Get Out! Move quickly but safely. Crawl low to the ground to avoid inhaling poisonous smoke. Feel all doors with the back of your hand before opening them.



Plan two ways out of every room in case one exit is blocked. These steps become second nature with regular fire drills.

Stay Out! You and the rest of your family will know everyone has escaped when you arrive at the safe meeting place. One family member should be designated to call 9-1-1 from a neighbor's house. The firefighters in your community have the equipment and training to save your home. Never go back inside a burning building.

SAFE MEETING PLACE

This pamphlet has a number of important fire safety tips. Talk to the members of your local fire department for additional ideas.

Fire Facts

- Each year, fire kills more Americans than all natural disasters combined.
- Direct property loss due to fires is estimated at \$8.6 billion each year.
- Over 40 percent of residential fires and three-fifths of residential fatalities occur in homes with no smoke alarms.
- Careless smoking is the leading cause of fire deaths. Smolder-resistant bedding and upholstered furniture are significant fire deterrents.

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WHEN FIRE STRIKES

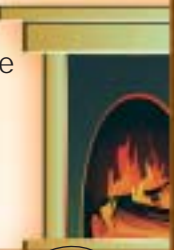


Four Home Fire Risks

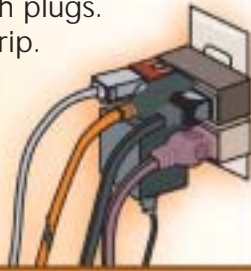
1. Kitchen: The #1 cause of home fires. Make sure ovens, stoves, and other appliances are clean and well-maintained. Never leave cooking unattended.



2. Heating: The second leading cause of home fires. Keep flammable objects a safe distance from space heaters, fireplaces, and wood stoves. Clean ashes regularly.



3. Electrical: Don't overload wall outlets with plugs. Use a power strip. Make sure cords on electrical appliances aren't worn.



4. Smoking: Causes the most fire-related deaths. Use deep ashtrays and empty them often. Never smoke in bed. Keep smoking materials away from children.



Smoke Alarms Help You Survive

A working smoke alarm cuts your chances of dying in a fire in half! Install one smoke alarm per level of your house, plus one outside every bedroom. Place on the ceiling whenever possible, 4-12 inches from the wall and away from windows and air ducts.

Test your smoke alarms once a month and replace the batteries twice a year. Never remove the batteries for another use. You can vacuum a smoke alarm to keep it clean. Replace your smoke alarm every 7 to 10 years.



Five Steps for Planning a Safe Escape

1. Draw a floor plan of your home.
2. Use arrows to show every possible exit. Have at least two for every room.
3. Designate a "Safe Meeting Place" so you know everyone has exited. This should be an easy-to-remember landmark like a mailbox or a tree.
4. Designate a family member to go to a neighbor's house to call 9-1-1.
5. Have special equipment ready, such as fireproof rope ladders for second-story exits.

Review the plan with your family on a regular basis.

Practice, Practice, Practice

In a real fire you don't have time to think about what you should do. Fire drills will make the steps of a safe escape second nature. **Hold practices at night, since that's when most fires occur,** and hold surprise drills to make sure your family responds quickly.

Feel Doors Before Opening

Use the back of your hand to feel doors. If the door is cool, open it just enough to see if the way out is clear. If it is warm, you need to go to your second exit.



Practice Second Story Exits Separately

Be careful! There is a risk of injury from falling. Practice second story escapes when someone is able to "spot" the person climbing out the window. When able, practice from a first floor window.



Practice All Possible Exits

Set up different scenarios during your drills so you and your family are familiar with all escape routes.



Crawl Low Through Smoke

Smoke makes it difficult to see. It is also poisonous to breathe. Crawling on your hands and knees gives you the best chance of getting out.



Never Go Back Inside!

You've done your job when you've made it to the safe meeting place. Now let the firefighters do theirs. There is never any reason to go back inside a burning building. Fire spreads too fast and the smoke is too poisonous. Once you're out, stay out.