

Is Your Family Prepared to Survive a Fire...

Home Fire Escape Planning & Practice

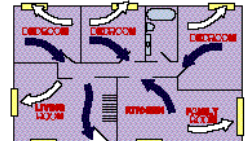


Install smoke alarms in all bedrooms, in the hallway, and on every level of your home, including the basement. Alarms should be tested once a month (use a broom handle to quickly test the unit) and batteries replaced at least once a year. Create an escape plan of your house and practice it often with every member of your household.

1. Plan Your Escape Today! Once a fire starts, there is NO time to plan how to get out. Sit down with your family *today* and make a step-by-step plan for escaping your home safely.

2. Draw a floor plan (birds-eye view) of your home with clearly marked exits.

Indicate all doors and windows, as well as stairways, porches and porch roofs. Clearly mark two ways out of every room, especially sleeping areas.

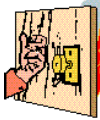


3. Locate & identify a central meeting place outside your home.



After escaping a fire, immediately find the meeting place, such as a mailbox, tree or neighbor's home and wait for the fire department to arrive. This meeting place will help the fire department identify missing or trapped persons inside the burning home. *Teach young children and others to never go back into a burning house for any reason. Let trained fire fighters do their job!*

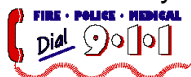
4. Practice...Practice...Practice your escape plan! Appoint a "fire chief" (typically father, mother, grandparent, etc.) to hold 'realistic' fire drills in the home and have *everyone* participate. Speed is vital, so get out quickly and carefully. Pretend some exits are blocked by fire and smoke and practice alternative escape routes.



- Test doors before opening them! While kneeling or crouching near the door, feel the crack between the door and it's frame and then reach up as high as you can and touch the door with the back of your hand. If you feel any warmth at all, *do not open* the door and use an alternate escape route. If the door feels cool, wedge your foot behind the door so you can slightly open the door with caution.

Note: As a precaution, sleep with bedroom doors closed. This will act as a barrier to protect you from the heat and smoke until the fire department arrives.

- As you exit the home, remain low to the ground on your hands and knees, crawling low under the smoke. Smoke contains deadly gases and heat rises; the cooler, cleaner air will be near the floor.



- If you are trapped, close all doors between you and the fire. Stuff cracks under the doors to keep smoke out. If there is a phone in the room, call 9-1-1 and report exactly where you are. Wait at a window and signal for help.

5. Be Prepared! Make sure everyone in the household can unlock all doors and windows quickly, even in the dark. Windows or doors with security bars need to be equipped with quick-release devices from the inside and everyone, including small children, should know how to use them.

FIRE PREVENTION IS YOUR BEST FIRE PROTECTION! Be careful when smoking and when using matches & lighters, gas appliances, and electrical devices/outlets. Avoid misuses of electrical appliances and outlets. Clean heating equipment annually and check for repairs regularly. You CAN prevent fires and protect your loved ones by remembering that... **Smoke Alarms SAVE Lives!**



Have an escape plan

Santa Clara County Fire Department

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