

THE IMPORTANCE OF ESCAPE PLANNING

Did You Know?

Approximately 3,500 people are killed and more than 17,000 are injured in fires across this country every year.

Don't become a statistic! Plan ahead so you know what to do.

There are two very important measures that you can take to protect yourself and the ones you love.

1. Install and maintain smoke detectors on every level of your home.
2. Have and follow a carefully thought-out and practiced escape plan.



Planning Your Home Fire Escape

- Bring all the people in your household together and write out your plan. Drawing a floor plan of your home and marking two exits from each room can prove to be a helpful aid, especially for children.
- Make sure all members of your household understand the escape plan. Be sure to assign someone to assist infants or anyone with mobility challenges.



- Choose an outside meeting place away from the home where all family members can meet after they have escaped. Examples of meeting places would be the mailbox, a neighbor's house, a street sign, etc. It is a good idea to share this meeting place with your neighbors as well.
- Walk through your home and make sure all escape routes are easily accessible and that doors and windows open easily. Never block an exit with furniture!
- Make sure your street number is visible from the street. You want emergency personnel to be able to find your home quickly.

Time to Practice!

Practicing your fire escape plan will help your family further familiarize themselves with the plan. If you did experience a fire, there would be less chance for panic and a greater chance that everyone will get out safely.

- Put your plan to the test by holding a family fire drill at least twice a year. It is important to practice in both warm and cold weather.
- It is a good idea to start your drill at night as that is when most fires occur. Also, because fire is very dark, it is good to practice at night time.
- During the drill, make certain that everyone, especially children, are awakened by the smoke detector. If someone is not easily awakened, assign another family member to wake them up.
- While performing your drill, everyone should practice crawling on their hands and knees. In a real fire situation, smoke and toxic fumes rise so the cleaner air is near the floor. By crawling low, you'll be able to breathe.
- If your home has more than one floor, it is important that all family members have a way to escape from the higher levels. If necessary, place escape ladders in or near windows, in an easily accessible area. Practice using the ladder from a first floor window so all family members will be prepared to use it in the event of a fire.