

Planning and Practicing Home Fire Escape Drills

When fire strikes...you may have less than one minute to safely get out of the building.

Knowing what to do can mean the difference between life and death!

Most fatal fires occur in the home. Having working smoke alarms and planning and practicing home fire escape drills can reduce your risk of injury or death. Children practice fire drills in school at least four times each year. Do you practice how to react to fire in your home? You should!

Fires are fast.

Fires double in size every minute.

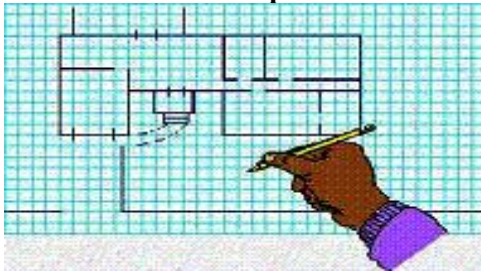
Fires are dark.

They are not like what you see on television or in the movies. Fires create thick, black, choking smoke which makes it impossible to see and breathe.

Fires produce heat, smoke and toxic gases.

Smoke alarms warn residents in the event of a fire. Smoke alarms give you time to leave the building before your escape route is blocked by deadly smoke, heat and toxic gases. When the smoke alarm sounds... **Get Out, Stay Out!**

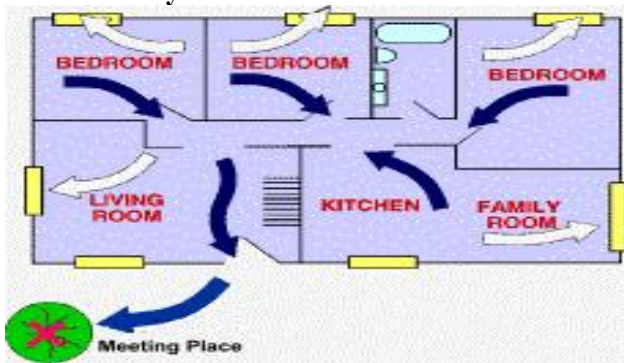
Plan a home fire escape route.



Draw a floor plan of your home.

Locate all doors, windows, halls and stairways that can be used to exit the building. Make sure that each family member can open door locks and window latches. Check to see if any windows have been painted shut. If your home has security bars they should have a quick-release feature that everyone can operate from inside. Keep exits and exit paths clear of obstacles such as furniture, toys, etc.

Have two ways out of each room.



Your **primary exit** should be the fastest, safest route outdoors.

Crawl low beneath smoke.

Heat and smoke tend to rise. The freshest, coolest air will be down low by the floor. Roll out of bed, onto the floor and crawl to the bedroom door.

Check doors for heat with the back of your hand.

If the door is cool, open it slowly. If the door is hot, keep it closed.

If the primary exit is blocked by smoke or fire, close any doors between you and the smoke, and use your secondary exit.

The **secondary exit** can be another doorway, stairway or window. Never use an elevator as a means of escape! If you must go to a window don't jump. Turn on the room lights, open the window and signal for help. Consider purchasing an escape ladder and training family members on how to use it.

Choose a meeting place.

Choose a place outside the home where family members can meet to be sure everyone is safely out of the building.

Call 911 from a neighbor's house.

Never go back inside a burning building.

Leave the firefighting to the trained professionals. They have the protective equipment and training to perform search, rescue and fire extinguishment. Discuss the plan with each member of the family so everyone understands what to do in an emergency.



Practice, Practice, Practice!

Conduct home fire escape drills frequently, at least twice a year, so actions become automatic behaviors.

Hold a family fire drill during the day, while everyone is awake and another one at night while children are asleep to see how they will respond. Following the drill, make adjustments to the plan.

Does someone in the family, who may be too young or physically impaired, need assistance? An adult can go to their room and help that person to an alternate escape route.

If a child sleeps through an alarm they may need to be awakened by an adult. Infants will need to be carried to safety.

Remember...When the alarm sounds:

- ✓ Take the portable fire information.
- ✓ Leave the building.
- ✓ Get out, stay out!
- ✓ Go to the family meeting place.
- ✓ Dial 911 from a neighbor's house.
- ✓ Wait at the meeting place for the fire department to arrive. Let them know if everyone is safe.
- ✓ Be sure to have your street address posted on your home, in numbers clearly visible from the street. This will help emergency personnel to locate your house quickly.

**Notify Pathways @ :
488-2444 (during office hours), or
499-4175 (during non-business hours)**