



Home Fires

Each year more than 2,500 people die and 12,600 are injured in home fires in the United States, with direct property loss due to home fires estimated at \$7.3 billion annually. Home fires can be prevented! Heat and smoke from fire can be more dangerous than the flames. Inhaling the super-hot air can sear your lungs. Asphyxiation is the leading cause of fire deaths, exceeding burns by a three-to-one ratio.

Before a Fire...

Create and practice a fire escape plan. Practice the plan twice a year.

- Find two ways to get out of each room.
- If the primary way is blocked by fire or smoke, you will need a second way out. A secondary route might be a window onto a neighboring roof or a collapsible ladder for escape from upper story windows.
- Teach children not to hide from firefighters.

A *properly installed and maintained* smoke alarm is the only thing in your home that can alert you and your family to a fire 24 hours a day, seven days a week. A working smoke alarm significantly increases your chances of surviving a deadly home fire.

- Install both ionization AND photoelectric smoke alarms, OR dual sensor smoke alarms, which contain both ionization and photoelectric smoke sensors .
- Test batteries monthly.

**Ask your local fire department to inspect your residence for fire safety and prevention.*

During a Fire...

CALL 9-1-1

- If you can't get out, close the door and cover vents and cracks around doors with cloth or tape to keep smoke out. Say where you are and signal for help at the window with a light-colored cloth or a flashlight.
- If you can't get to someone needing assistance, leave the home and call 9-1-1 or the fire department. Tell the emergency operator where the person is located.
- If pets are trapped inside your home, tell firefighters right away.

Did You Know?

To protect yourself, it is important to understand the basic characteristics of fire. Fire spreads quickly; there is no time to gather valuables or make a phone call. In just two minutes, a fire can become life-threatening. In five minutes, a residence can be engulfed in flames.

For additional information on fires, go to www.ready.gov or usfa.fema.gov.

Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

