



FIRE DEPARTMENT

EXIT DRILLS IN THE HOME (EDITH)

People can survive even major fires in their homes . . . if they get out quickly and stay out.

HOW TO SURVIVE

- Learn how to prevent fires
- Install and maintain smoke detectors
- Make an escape plan and practice it
- Consider installing an automatic fire sprinkler system

PLAN YOUR ESCAPE

When a fire occurs, there is no time for planning. Sit down with your family today and make a step-by-step plan for escaping a fire.

- Draw a floor plan of your home, marking two ways out of every room, especially the sleeping areas.
- Agree on a meeting place outside your home where every member of the household will gather after escaping a fire to wait for the fire department. This allows you to count heads and inform the fire department if anyone is trapped inside the burning building.
- Practice your escape plan at least twice a year. Have a fire drill in your home. Appoint someone to be the monitor and have everyone participate. A fire drill is not a race. Get out quickly, but carefully!
- Make your exit drill realistic. Pretend that some exits are blocked by fire and practice alternate escape routes. Pretend that the lights are out and that some escape routes are filling with smoke.

BE PREPARED

Make sure everyone in the household can unlock all doors and windows quickly, even in the dark. If you live in an apartment, use stairways to leave the building. Never use an elevator during a fire, it may stop between floors or take you to a floor where the fire is burning.

- If you live in a two-story house and you must escape from a second story window, be sure there is a safe way to reach the ground. Make special arrangements for children, older adults, and people with disabilities. People who

have difficulty moving should have a phone in their bedroom and, if possible, should sleep on the ground floor.

- Test doors before you open them. While kneeling or crouching at the door, reach up as high as you can and touch the door, the knob, and the space between the door and its frame with the back of your hand. If the door is hot, use another escape route. If the door is cool, open it with caution.
- If you are trapped, close the doors between you and the fire. Stuff the cracks around the doors to keep the smoke out. Wait at a window and signal for help with a light colored cloth or a flashlight. If there is a phone in the room, call 911 and tell them exactly where you are.

GET OUT FAST

- In case of a fire, do not stop for anything. Do not try to rescue possessions or pets. Go directly to your meeting place and then call 911 from a neighbor's phone or an alarm box. Every member of your household should know how to call 911.
- Crawl low under smoke. Smoke contains deadly gases, and heat rises. Cleaner air will be near the floor. If you encounter smoke using your primary exit, use your alternate escape plan. If you must exit through the smoke, crawl on your hands and knees, keeping your head 12 to 24 inches above the floor.

...and STAY OUT

Once you are out of your home, do not go back for any reason. If people are trapped, the firefighters have the best chance of rescuing them. The heat and smoke of a fire are overpowering. Firefighters have the training, experience, and protective equipment needed to enter burning buildings.

PLAY IT SAFE

Smoke detectors: More than half of all fatal home fires happen at night, while people are asleep. Smoke detectors should sound an alarm when a fire starts, waking people before they are trapped or overcome by smoke. With smoke detectors, your risk of dying in a home fire is cut nearly in half. Install smoke detectors in each sleeping room and at a point centrally located in the corridor or area giving access to each separate sleeping area. Change the batteries at least once a year. If your detector is more than 10 years old, replace it.