

Practice Your Family Fire Drill !

Dear Parents:

Would your family know how to escape if there were a fire in your home? A home escape plan will allow you to get out of the home safely in case of a fire. Here are some easy steps for you to follow in making your plan.

Get your family together and draw a map of your home. If possible, plan two ways out of each room. The first should be a door, and the second could be another door or a window.

Make sure doors and windows can be opened easily. In a two-story building, plan your second way out through a window onto a balcony or porch. If you must use an escape ladder, be sure everyone knows how to use it.

Choose a meeting place for all family members outside the home and mark it on the map. This should be something that always stays in the same place, such as a tree, a telephone pole, or a neighbor's home. The meeting place should be in front of the home and safely away from it.

Once you have a map, you should conduct a fire drill to practice your plan, and everyone in your home should participate. Push the smoke alarm test button to start the fire drill, then get outside fast and stay outside. Close doors behind you as you leave and go to your outside meeting place.

If you live in an apartment, use the stairs. Never use an elevator in case of a fire. The elevator could take you to the floor where the fire is burning. If fire blocks your exit, close your apartment door and cover all cracks through which smoke could enter. Telephone the fire department, even if firefighters are already at the building, and tell them where you are. Wave a sheet or towel from the window to help firefighters find you.

Talk about who will call the fire department. Make sure you know your local emergency number. In many communities, 9-1-1 calls the fire department, but it does not do so in all communities.

You should have a fire drill at least twice a year with everyone in your home, and family members should practice using their second way out, as well as their primary route.

Smoke alarms should be installed inside each bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of your home including the basement. Test them at least monthly and make sure everyone can hear them. Remember, children may not wake up to the sound of a smoke alarm, so you must plan for an adult to wake them and help them get out. Practice this, as well.

For the best protection, connect all the smoke alarms so that they all sound when one sounds. Interconnected alarms provide even more safety. If you are remodeling your home or building a new one, consider installing a home fire sprinkler system.

Sincerely,



National Fire Protection Association

1 Batterymarch Park • Quincy, MA 02169 • www.nfpa.org