

# Fire Safety Tips

## Practice Fire Safety

- **Do You Know E.D.I.T.H.?**

**E.D.I.T.H. - Exit Drills In The Home** is a way family members can gain knowledge about different ways to escape from their home. Families should plan and practice together what to do in case there is a fire in the home.

All family members should know the following components of a good emergency escape plan:

- Emergency escape routes out of your home
- Two ways out of each room
- Establish an outside meeting place (neighbor's house, parkway)
- Once out - Stay out! Do not return to retrieve items from your house.

PRACTICE your home fire drill often!

DO THIS TEST AT HOME:

Stand in your bedroom or another room that you know very well. Close your eyes and turn around three times. Keeping your eyes closed, crawl on your hands and knees to the door. Can you find it quickly in the dark?

This is how you would feel in a real fire. Even if you know your way out of your room very well, it will be difficult to find your way out. You can be prepared by practicing your escape route often and keeping a flashlight nearby.

- **Smoke**

**Get Below The Smoke! Crawl And Go, Stay Low!**

More people die from smoke inhalation than by fire. Heat and smoke in a fire rise leaving a small area of cooler cleaner air near the floor. Crawl like a baby - Stay Low and Go! This will help you get out of a fire situation safely. You can practice this by holding a sheet or blanket about two feet off of the floor and have your children crawl under the "smoke" to safety.

- **Install and check smoke detectors.**  
Because the smell of smoke WILL NOT wake you while you sleep, you must rely on a smoke alarm to save your life. Make sure your home has a smoke detector near each sleeping area and escape route. Remember to change the batteries often. It is a good idea to change the batteries twice a year when you change your clocks for Daylight Savings Time.

Smoke alarms are an excellent early warning system. When a home fire starts, every second counts. A smoke alarm can provide the valuable time needed to exit the home safely.

- o Choose detectors that are tested and rated by Underwriters Laboratories (UL).
- o Place detectors on each level of your home, and especially in the hallway ceilings near sleeping areas. Don't place them too close to cooking areas, in the garage or near vents.
- o Maintain units by testing batteries monthly and replacing weak ones immediately.
- **Always sleep with your bedroom door closed.**  
The closed door will delay the fire and smoke from entering your room and give you time to escape. It is also a good idea to keep a flashlight near your bed so you can find your way around. Remember, in a real fire there is no light!
- **Know how to dial the emergency fire number- 911**  
Post this number near the phone where it will be easily seen.
- **Have fire extinguishers accessible.**  
Locate extinguishers in each level of your home. Keep one in the kitchen, not too close to the stove. Don't forget the garage, workshop, basement, camper and vacation home.

Different areas of the home will require different extinguishers. For more on the different types of extinguishers and the proper way to use them, please see our Fire Extinguisher Facts section.

Maintain extinguishers by checking them monthly to be sure each is holding its charge.

- **Conduct regular fire inspections**  
Harrisburg Fire & Rescue has developed a Residential Fire Safety Checklist to assist you in identifying fire hazards in your home. In addition, professional inspectors can help you survey your home. Call 541-995-6412 between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm Monday through Friday to schedule an appointment.

## **Cooking:**

- **Grease Fires:** Always keep a potholder, oven mitt and lid handy. If a small grease fire starts in a pan, put on an oven mitt and smother the flames by carefully sliding the lid over the pan. Turn off the burner. Don't remove the lid until it is completely cool. Never pour water on a grease fire and never discharge a fire extinguisher onto a pan fire, as it can spray or shoot burning grease around the kitchen, actually spreading the fire.
- **Oven Fires:** Turn off the heat and keep the door closed to prevent flames from burning you and your clothing.

- **Microwave Fires:** Keep the door closed and unplug the microwave. Call the fire department and make sure to have the oven serviced before you use it again. Food cooked in a microwave can be dangerously hot. Remove the lids or other coverings from microwaved food carefully to prevent steam burns.

### Gasoline:

Gasoline can cause serious burns. Recreational vehicles, lawn mowers and power tools are the primary sources. Remember to let the engine sit and cool before refilling the tank. Keep gasoline in a “safety can” and store in an outdoor shed, not in the house or garage.

### Barbecue/Charcoal:

Store unused charcoal in a cool, dry place as damp coal can ignite itself. Be careful around barbecues. Do not wear long sleeves. If clothes catch fire, do not run. Drop and roll to smother the flames. Make sure your barbecue is completely out before you leave the area.

### Hotel Fire Safety Tips:

After checking into your room, check the fire exits. Do the doors open? Count the doorways and other features between your room and the exits. Remember, never use the elevator in a fire.

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### What to do in a Fire:

- When the fire alarm wakes you, roll out of bed to the floor. Always stay as close to the floor as possible; the air is cleaner and cooler near the ground. In a blaze, the temperature at knee level may be as cool as 90 degrees, but a burning 690 degrees at shoulder level. Stay on your hands and knees to avoid the heat and smoke.
  - Crawl to the door and touch it to see if it's hot. If the door is cool, open it a crack to check for smoke. If there is none, leave by your escape route. Remember to crawl and keep your head low. On your way out, be sure to close all doors behind you. This can delay the fire for hours.
  - Do not open the door if it feels hot! Opening the door will only let in the harmful smoke and gas. Keep the door shut and look for a different escape route. Go to the window if possible.
  - If you are unable to leave your room or apartment, seal the cracks around the door with wet towels or blankets, and try to let some fresh air in through the window. Call 911 if possible, and tell them exactly where you are. Shout for help and signal your position by waving a bright cloth or sheet.
  - If your clothes catch on fire, do not run!  
**STOP** where you are - **DO NOT RUN!**;  
**DROP** to the floor or ground; and  
**ROLL** back and forth using your hands to cover your face. Roll as many times as necessary until the fire is out.
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## Fire Facts:

### Fire is black

A real fire is so dark that you can barely see the flames. You will be lost and confused by the thick smoke even in your own bedroom, unless you know what to do. You must know how to escape your home with your eyes closed.

### The odor of smoke will not wake you

The poisonous gases actually put you into a deeper sleep! Most fires occur at night and only a loud noise, such as a smoke alarm will wake you when you're sleeping.

### The fire's heat is intense

You don't have to be near the flames to be injured. Your body cannot survive temperatures higher than 150 degrees, (that's hot enough to cook some food in an oven), and a fire can rage over 600 degrees! Learn what you can do to survive this kind of heat.

### There is no time to think

You may have as little as one minute to escape once a fire starts. If a fire is not put out in 30 seconds, it should be considered out of control. Every second must be used to get out!

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## Common Causes of House Fires:

- **Cigarettes**

If anyone in the house smokes, provide a lot of large, steady ashtrays. Be alert for a smoker who is sick in bed. Before retiring for the night, check cushions in rooms where people have been smoking.

- **Electrical / Overloaded outlets:**

Replace or repair any electrical device with a loose or frayed cord.

Avoid running extension cords across doorways or under carpets.

In homes with small children, electrical outlets should have plastic safety covers.

Follow the manufacturer's instructions for plugging an appliance into a receptacle outlet. Most receptacle outlets contain two receptacles. As an added precaution, consider plugging only one high-wattage appliance into each receptacle outlet.

Avoid the use of "cube taps" and other devices that allow the connection of multiple appliances into a single receptacle.

Place lamps on level surfaces, away from things that can burn.

Use bulbs that match the lamp's recommended wattage.

- **Children playing with matches and lighters**