

## **Fire Safety- It Starts at Home! What Everyone Needs to Know**

Is your home fire safe? Have you practiced what to do if ever there is a fire in your home? Do you have smoke detectors? Are they working? When was the last time you checked the batteries? □□ We know that nothing is more important to you than your family's safety. If you couldn't answer "yes" to the all of the questions above, then there are things you can do today that will assure you and your family sleep safer tonight. It easy! And even if you answered those questions correctly, check below to make sure you've done all you can. □□ Below are ten simple steps you can do today that will drastically improve the safety of your home, and assure that your family reacts correctly in the event of a fire.

### **10 Simple Steps to a Safer Home**



**Take fire safety seriously!** If you don't, your children won't!

**Make your "Family Escape Plan."** Create a simple, easy to understand escape plan, include two exit routes from every room, and a safe meeting place outside your home (like a tree, telephone pole, or neighbor's home) where your family will gather once outside the home.

**Practice fire safety!** Your children know that if they want to be good at something, they have to practice. Fire Safety is no difference. Take time to practice your family escape plan, making sure to have two exits from every room. Practice with your children several times, then allow them to do it by themselves to make sure that they fully understand what they should do if ever there's a fire.

**Keep your home safe!** Fire safety is not a once-a-year exercise. It must be part of your daily focus. Just as important as knowing what to do in the event of a fire, it is just as important to take steps to assure a fire never starts, and if a fire does start, that your family will be alerted as quickly as possible.

**Install Smoke Detectors!** Statistics show that more than half of all fire deaths occur in homes with no smoke alarms, and nearly three quarters of fire deaths occur in homes without alarms or with non-functioning alarms. By placing smoke detectors in your home, you can increase the chances that all of your family gets out safely by 40-50%! Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- a) One in every room! It's important that smoke detectors are located throughout your home, and most importantly, in every bedroom.
- b) Test them! Make sure the batteries are good and that the smoke detector itself is in proper working condition. Test your smoke detectors once a month.
- c) Not sure? Replace them! If your smoke detectors are older, or if you're not sure they are in proper working condition, think about changing them. Improvements to newer smoke detectors could provide a better level of protection to you and your family.

**Change batteries twice a year!** Most fire safety personnel recommend changing the batteries within your smoke detectors twice year. It's a simple, yet powerful message, "Working smoke detectors save lives!" Can't remember the last time you changed the batteries? Why take a chance? Change them now!

**Know that sound!** Make sure that all family members know and recognize the sound your smoke detectors make. An easy way to accomplish this is to make sure that you gather your family together each time you test your smoke detectors. The quicker you recognize that sound, the quicker you can react if ever there's a fire.

**Keep a look-out for safety hazards in the home!** To many items plugged into one outlet, a shirt thrown over a lamp, a worn electrical cord; these are just a few examples of hazards within the home.

**Be careful when cooking!** Make sure that young children never cook without proper supervision. And make sure to keep cooking surfaces clean to avoid grease fires. A majority of fires within the home begin in the kitchen.

**Every home should have a fire extinguisher!** Keep a fire extinguisher in a handy location. The best location is typically just inside a door or entrance, out of the reach of children. Avoid locating an extinguisher right next to where a fire could develop. Remember, a fire extinguisher is no substitute for the fire department, but it can be used to stop a small fire from getting out of control. Know how to use it! It's too late to learn once a fire has begun.