



LOSS CONTROL BULLETIN

Family Fire Plan

Fact: In 2009, firefighters responded to 362,500 fires in the United States.

Fires are a real danger and should not be taken lightly. Every family should take the time to develop a fire escape plan and educate young children about fires in an effort to keep all members of the household safe. It is better to be prepared than to be caught off guard and be devastated by tragedy.

Did you know?

- 41% of home structure fires begin in the kitchen.
- Most home structure fires and home fire deaths are reported in December, January and February.
- 63% of deaths in reported home fires happened in homes without smoke alarms or homes where the smoke alarm did not work.
- It takes 10 to 15 minutes for a fire to burn through a wooden door.
- The majority of house fires take place between 8 p.m. and 8 a.m.
- More people die in house fires between midnight and 4 a.m..

Plan ahead for the safety of you and your family:

- As a family, visit every room in the house and plan two escape routes from that room. It will usually be the normal exit and a window or another door.
- Agree on a meeting place outside of the home that is a safe distance from the house. This should be something that will not move. Consider your mailbox as a possibility.
- Develop a floor plan that shows the fire escape plan. Make sure to indicate all windows, doors, stairs and halls, as well as the regular and emergency exit routes. Also indicate emergency numbers on the floor plan.
- Children should practice saying the address to the fire department. Have them practice saying the family name and address on the phone.

It is important to practice your fire emergency plan so everyone knows exactly what to do. Consider practicing at least every 6 months.

Try the following during your family practice:

- Have each member of the family stationed in their rooms.
- Turn off all of the lights.
- Press the test button on the smoke detector to activate it.
- At this point, each family member should “awaken”, and yell to others to alert them.
- Exit the rooms according to the emergency exit plan.
- Remember to practice crawling under the smoke and testing doors for heat before you open them.
- Meet at the designated location outside of the house.

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FAMILY OF COMPANIES

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Teach your children how to:

- Escape from each room of the house.
- Climb out of first-story windows.
- Crawl under the smoke to find an exit.
- Use their shirt, or another piece of clothing, to cover their mouths and noses to help them breathe.
- Stop.....Drop.....Roll.

In case of a fire:

- Get low on the ground. Heat rises, so cooler, fresher air can be found near the floor.
- Never open a door in a fire without testing to see if it is hot.
- DO NOT open a door if it is hot. That means there is fire on the other side. Use the other emergency exit.
- If a door is not hot, open it slowly, but be prepared to close it quickly if there are flames on the other side.
- All doors between you and smoke should be closed.
- Cracks should be stuffed and vents covered to keep smoke as far away as possible.
- In the event that you must go out a window, and there is a child with you, lower the child down first. Otherwise, they can become scared and refuse to follow you.
- Once two people have reached the meeting spot, ONE person should go for help.
- Never re-enter a burning building or house for any reason.

Other things to remember:

- If you live in an apartment or high-rise building, fire escape plans will be posted for everyone to see. However, these plans usually do not include individual escape routes for each apartment.
- Each family should develop a plan for safely exiting their apartment and practice that plan.
- In the event of a fire, never use an elevator.
- When at all possible, avoid jumping from upper floors of a building or house. However, in severe circumstances, a person can hang from the second story and drop feet first. It is far better to have a sprained ankle or broken leg than to not escape the fire.



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