



A safe home is in your hands.



### **Fire Safety: Be Proactive to Reduce Fire-Related Injury and Death**

Are you doing enough to prevent a home fire? Despite a recent study revealing that 97 percent of households have installed smoke alarms, home fires continue to be the third leading cause of unintentional home injury-related deaths.

According to the Home Safety Council's *State of Home Safety in America*<sup>™</sup> report, although the majority of Americans report having smoke alarms installed within their homes, only 20 percent actually test their smoke alarms on a regular basis. Additional research also shows that more than half of American families (64%) polled have *never* planned or practiced a fire escape plan.

"The fact that fire and burns continue to be a leading cause of home injury death is a clear sign that Americans need to take a more proactive role in their own safety," said Meri-K Appy, president of the Home Safety Council. "If you don't have working smoke alarms on every level of your home and a well rehearsed fire escape plan, you are exposing your entire household to an increased risk of fire and fire injury."

To reduce fire-related injuries, the Home Safety Council suggests a two-pronged approach: install and test smoke alarms, and then create a fire escape plan for your household. Recommended guidelines are as follows:

#### **Installing and Testing Smoke Alarms**

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including the basement and in or near all sleeping areas.
- Test smoke alarms at least once a month, as well as upon return from an extended vacation or trip. Replace batteries at least once a year.
- Never disable smoke alarms; even temporarily – you may forget to replace the battery.
- Smoke alarms don't last forever; replace once every ten years.
- Consider installing an automatic home fire sprinkling system. While smoke alarms provide early warning of the fire, sprinklers immediately suppress and even extinguish the fire, often before the fire department arrives.
- For the best detection and notification protection, install both ionization- and photoelectric-type smoke alarms. Some models provide dual coverage. The type will be printed on the box or package.



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### **Creating a Fire Escape Plan**

- Know how to get out fast if there is a fire.
- Find two ways out of every room – the door and maybe the window. You might need an escape ladder to get out of upstairs bedroom windows.
- Children and older people will need help escaping a fire. Plan for this.
- Know who needs help and pick someone to help them.
- Make sure windows and doors open easily.
- Make sure everyone can reach and open locks on doors and windows.
- Make sure stairs and doorways are never blocked.
- If you have security bars on doors and windows, have a “quick-release” latch. This makes it easy to get outside in an emergency.
- Practice your plan two times a year with your family.
- Practice when everyone else is asleep at least one.
- Have a place to meet in front of your house.
- Know the Fire Department emergency number. In most towns the number to call is 9-1-1.
- If there is a fire, get out first, and go to your family meeting place. Then call the Fire Department.
- Get out and stay out. Never go back inside a burning building.

Take steps now to prevent tragedy later. To learn more about fire prevention visit [www.homesafetycouncil.org](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org).