

PUBLIC AWARENESS FOR A FIRE

DEVELOP A FAMILY DISASTER PLAN

- If smoke alarms are not already in place, install them outside each sleeping area and on each additional level of your home in accordance with local codes.
- Draw a floor plan of your home; mark (if possible) two fire escape routes.
- Consider escape ladders for sleeping areas on the second or third floors.
- Burglar bars and locks that block outside windows entry must be easy to pen from the inside.
- Select a safe outside meeting place for everyone to meet after escaping from a fire.
- Conduct a home fire drill at least twice a year with all members of your household.

WHAT TO TELL CHILDREN

- Practice stop, drop and roll procedure.
- Practice crawling low.
- Matches & lighters are tools for “grown-ups”.
- If a fire starts in your home or you hear the smoke alarm yell “FIRE” several times and go outside right away.
- If you are escaping through a closed door, feel the door, cracks and door knob with the back of your hand before opening the door.
- If your escape route is filled with smoke, use your second way out.
- If smoke, heat or flames block your exit routes and you cannot get outside safely, stay in the room with your door closed.
 - Open the windows for ventilation, and hang a sheet outside the window so fire fighters can find you.
- Get out as safely and quickly as you can.
- Once you are out stay out.
- Once you are outside, go to your meeting place and then send one person to call the fire department.
- Firefighters are our friends and they will help in case of a fire.

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY

- If smoke alarms are not already in place, install them outside each sleeping area and on each additional level of your home in accordance with local codes.
- If people sleep with doors closed, install smoke alarms inside sleeping areas too.
- Vacuum cobwebs and dust from your smoke alarms monthly.
- Use the test button to test your smoke alarms once a month.
- If you have battery-powered smoke alarms, replace batteries at least once a year.
- Replace your smoke alarms every 10 years.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

- Consider having one or more fire extinguishers in your home.

- Get training from the fire department or a fire extinguisher manufacturer/distributor on how to use your fire extinguisher.
- Install extinguishers high on the wall, near an exit and away from heat source.
- If you try to use a fire extinguisher on a fire and the fire does not immediately die down, drop the extinguisher and get out.
- Never through water on a kitchen fire.
- Check your extinguisher to ensure it is properly charged. Recently inspected.

MEDIA AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION IDEAS

- Publish a newspaper series (with input from authorities) on how to recognize potential fire hazards in the home and work place.
- Run a story feature interviews with local fire officials about how to make homes fire safe.
- Provide tips on conducting fire drills in the home, mentioning the need for multiple escape routes and a meeting place outside the home.
- Highlight the importance of home smoke alarms by running monthly “battery-check reminders”.

HELP PREVENT FIRES

- Avoid smoking in bed or when drowsy or medicated.
- Provide smokers with deep sturdy ash trays. Douse cigarette and cigar butts with water before disposal.
- Keep matches and lighters stored in high locations, away from children, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- Make sure heating sources in your home are clean and in working order.
- Keep stove areas clean and clear of combustibles.
- Cook with short restrained sleeves.
- Conduct home hazard hunt.
- Avoid leaving electrical equipment like irons, fans, extension cords etc., plugged in unattended or when away from home.

WHAT TO DO DURING A FIRE

Get out as quickly and as safely as possible.

If a stove fire starts, slide a lid over the burning pan and turn off the burner, leave the lid in place until the pan is completely cool.

- If you try to use a fire extinguisher on a fire and the fire does not immediately die down, drop the extinguisher and get out.
- If you are escaping through a closed door, feel the door, cracks and door knob with the back of your hand before opening the door.
- If your escape route is filled with smoke, use your second way out.
- If you must exit through smoke, crawl low under the smoke to your exit.
- Close doors behind you as you escape to delay the spread of the fire.
- If smoke, heat or flames block your exit routes and you cannot get outside safely, stay in the room with your door closed.

- Open the windows for ventilation, and hang a sheet outside the window so fire fighters can find you.
- Once you are out stay out.
- Get out first, away from toxic smoke and gases, then call the fire department from a neighbors' home or from an outside phone.

WHAT TO DO AFTER A FIRE

- Give first aid where needed (if you are trained to do so).
- Stay out of fire-damaged homes until local fire authorities say it is safe to re-enter.
- Look for structural damage.
- Check that all wiring and utilities are safe.
- Discard food that has been exposed to heat, smoke or soot.
- Contact your insurance agent.