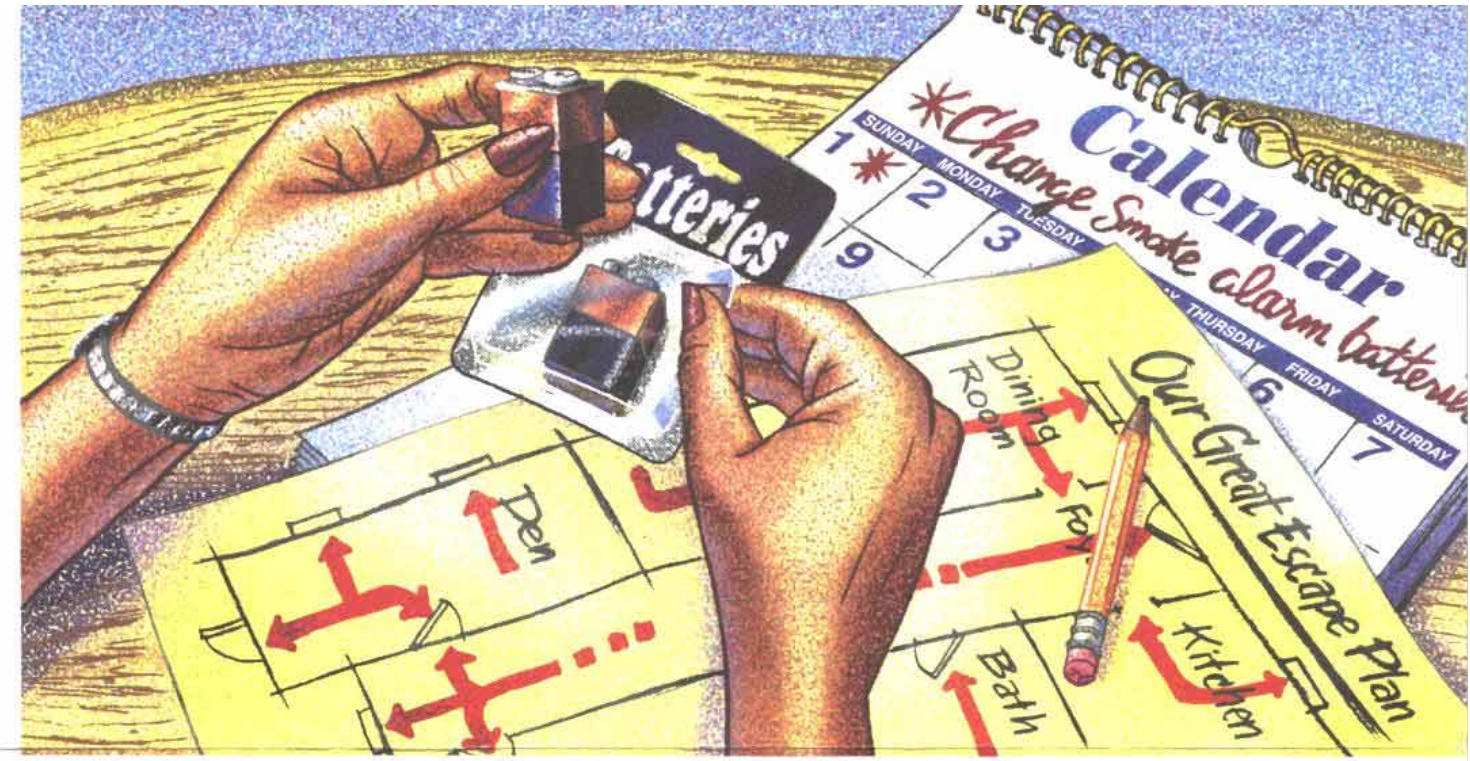
Fire

NFPA®

American Red Cross



Are You Ready for a Fire?

Here's what you can do to prepare for such an emergency

Make your home fire-safe

- ✔ Smoke alarms save lives. Install a smoke alarm outside each sleeping area and on each additional level of your home.
- ✔ If people sleep with doors closed, install smoke alarms inside sleeping areas, too.
- ✔ Use the test button to check each smoke alarm once a month. When necessary, replace batteries immediately. Replace all batteries at least once a year.
- ✔ Vacuum away cobwebs and dust from your smoke alarms monthly.
- ✔ Smoke alarms become less sensitive over time. Replace your smoke alarms every ten years.
- ✔ Consider having one or more working fire extinguishers in your home. Get training from the fire department in how to use them.
- ✔ Consider installing an automatic fire sprinkler system in your home.

Plan your escape routes

- ✔ Determine at least two ways to escape from every room of your home.
- ✔ Consider escape ladders for sleeping areas on the second or third floor. Learn how to use them and store them near the window.
- ✔ Select a location outside your home where everyone would meet after escaping.
- ✔ Practice your escape plan at least twice a year.

Escape safely

- ✔ Once you are out, stay out! Call the fire department from a neighbor's home.
- ✔ If you see smoke or fire in your first escape route, use your second way out. If you must exit through smoke, crawl low under the smoke to your exit.
- ✔ If you are escaping through a closed door, feel the door before opening it. If it is warm, use your second way out.
- ✔ If smoke, heat, or flames block your exit routes, stay in the room with the door closed. Signal for help using a bright-colored cloth at the window. If there is a telephone in the room, call the fire department and tell them where you are.

Your local contact is:

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Fire is one of the most common disasters. Fire causes more deaths than any other type of disaster. But fire doesn't have to be deadly if you have early warning from a smoke detector and everyone in your family knows how to escape calmly.

Please be serious about the responsibility of planning for and practicing what to do in case of a fire. Be prepared by having various household members do each of the items on the checklist below. Then get together to discuss and finalize your personal Fire Plan.

____ **Install smoke alarms outside each sleeping area and on each additional level of your residence. Keep new batteries on hand.**

New smoke alarms installed; batteries purchased: _____
(date)

____ **Test smoke alarms once a month. Start a chart and sign it after each round of tests.**

_____ tests smoke alarms.
(Family member name)

____ **Look at the fire extinguisher you have to ensure it is properly charged. Use the gauge or test button to check proper pressure. If the unit is low on pressure, damaged, or corroded, replace it or have it professionally serviced. Get training from the fire department in how to use the fire extinguisher. Only adults should handle and use extinguishers.**

_____ examines extinguisher.
(Adult family member name)

_____ have been trained to use the extinguisher.
(Adult family member names)

____ **Draw a floor plan of your home; mark two fire escape routes for each room.**

Floor plan completed: _____
(date)

____ **Pick a safe outside place to meet after escaping from a fire.**

Meeting place: _____

____ **Practice a crawl-low escape from your bedroom. Try it with your eyes closed to see how well you could do in thick smoke.**

Smoke escape drill conducted: _____
(date)

____ **Conduct a home fire drill at least twice a year with all members of your household.**

Home fire drill conducted: _____
(date)

And remember . . . when a fire, earthquake, flood, hurricane, or other emergency happens in your community, you can count on your local American Red Cross chapter to be there to help you and your family. Your Red Cross is not a government agency and depends on contributions of your time, money, and blood.

The nonprofit National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has led the way to fire safety since 1896. The mission of the NFPA is protecting people, their property, and the environment from the effects of fire and related hazards.

For more information, contact your local American Red Cross chapter or fire department. You can also visit these Web sites:

American Red Cross: **www.redcross.org**

National Fire Protection Association: **www.NFPA.org**

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