

**EDITH- Exit Drills In The Home**

In 1995, 3640 Americans died in home fires. That's roughly 10 people a day. Tens of thousands more were injured. People can survive even major fires in their homes if they are alerted to the fire and get out quickly and stay out.

**HOW TO SURVIVE**

- Install smoke detectors and keep them in working order.
- Make an escape plan and "practice" it.
- Consider installing an automatic fire-sprinkler system.



**PLAN YOUR ESCAPE**

Once a fire has started, there is no time to plan how to get out. Sit down with your family today, and make a step-by-step plan for escaping a fire.

**Draw a floor Plan of your Home**, marking two ways out of every room - especially sleeping areas. Discuss the escape routes with every member of your household.

**Agree on a Meeting Place**, where every member of the household will gather outside your home after escaping a fire to wait for the fire department. This allows you to count heads and inform the fire department if anyone is missing. **Practice your escape plan** at least twice a year. Have a fire drill in your home. Appoint someone to be the monitor, and have everyone participate. A fire drill is not a race. Get out quickly, but carefully.

**MAKE YOUR EXIT DRILL REALISTIC**

Pretend that some exits are blocked by fire, and practice alternative escape routes. Pretend that the lights are out and that some escape routes are filling with smoke.

**Be Prepared**

Make sure everyone in the household can unlock all doors and windows quickly, even in the dark. Windows or doors with security bars need to be equipped with quick-release devices, and everyone in the household should know how to use them. **If you live in an apartment building**, use stairways to escape. NEVER use an elevator during a fire. It may stop between floors or take you to a floor where the fire is burning. Some high-rise buildings may have evacuation routes. **If you live in a multi-story house** and you must escape from an upper story window, be sure there is a safe way to reach the ground, such as a fire-resistant fire escape ladder. Make special arrangements for children, older adults, and people with disabilities. **Test doors before opening them.**

While kneeling or crouching at the door, reach up as high as you can and with the back of your hand touch the door, the knob, and the crack between the door and its frame. If you feel any warmth at all, use another escape route. **If you are trapped**, close all doors between you and the fire. Stuff the cracks around the doors to keep out smoke. Wait at a window and signal for help with a flashlight or by waving a light colored cloth. If there is a fire, **GET OUT FAST . . .**

**In case of a fire, don't stop for anything.** Do not try to rescue possessions or pets. Go directly to your meeting place, and then call the fire department from a neighbor's phone, a portable phone, or an alarm box. **Crawl low under smoke.**

Smoke contains deadly gases, and heat rises. During a fire, cleaner air will be near the floor. If you encounter smoke when using your primary exit, use an alternative escape route. If you must exit through smoke, crawl on hands and knees, **and stay out**

Once you are out of your home, don't go back for any reason. If people are trapped, the firefighters have the best chance of rescuing them. The heat and smoke of a fire are overpowering. Firefighters have the training, equipment, and experience to rescue them.

**Play IT Safe**

**Smoke Detectors.** More than half of all fatal home fires happen at night while people are asleep. Smoke detectors sound an alarm when a fire starts, waking people before they are trapped or overcome by smoke.

**Automatic fire-sprinkler systems.**

These systems attack a fire in its early stages by spraying water only on the area where the fire has begun. Consider including sprinkler systems in plans for new construction and installing them in existing homes.

**NOW, use what you've learned,**

**SET UP YOUR PLAN**, including two ways out, a meeting place and

**CONDUCT A PRACTICE DRILL** to determine if anything has been overlooked.

**EVERYONE** in the household **NEEDS TO PARTICIPATE** for it to be successful.

It may **SAVE YOUR LIFE.**

This information is also available in a brochure provided by the  
National Fire Protection Association  
Battery Park, Quincy MA 02269-91