



Home Escape Planning

In a home fire, you may have only 2-3 minutes to get everyone out safely. Having working smoke alarms and practicing a home fire drill twice a year can save your life, and the lives of those you love.

Here are some simple steps that you can take to prepare for a fire in your home should it happen:

- Sit down with your family and draw a map or floor plan of your home. Show all windows and doors. Show the location of each smoke alarm. Discuss these escape routes with each family member.
- Establish a meeting place outside your home. This can be a mailbox, tree, stop sign or anything else permanent. The entire household should know to go to this spot in case of an emergency escape from the house. That way the entire household can be accounted for.
- Practice the plan - have fire drills at home, at least twice a year.
 - Push the button on the smoke alarm so everyone will know what sound it makes. When the button is pushed, everyone should pretend it is a real fire and practice the escape plan.
 - Crawl low on the floor, even if you don't see any smoke. Feel the door to the bedroom if it is closed. Feel around the frame and the knob. If it is hot, don't open it. Use the second way out.
 - If the door is not hot, open it slowly, looking for smoke or flames. It is important to crawl since the heat and smoke will rise. The air near the floor will be cleaner - get low and Go!

- Go to the family meeting place and make sure everyone was able to get out.
- Make any changes to the plan that need to be made, then post the plan on the refrigerator or board so everyone can see it.

Some important points to remember:

- In case of a real fire, never go back inside for anything.
- Post the emergency numbers by the phone, just in case.
- Make sure that doors and windows open easily. Windows with security equipment may need a quick-release device, or a key kept nearby.
- If you live in an apartment building, or multi-story building, remember to always use the stairs. Never use the elevator when there is a fire or fire alarm.

Plan Now!

If you live in a two-story home, you may need to obtain a home fire escape ladder for a safe way to reach the ground. Be sure and make special arrangements in your plan for those with disabilities, children, or older adults who may need assistance.

Smoke Alarms DO Save Lives!

Most fatal fires happen at night, when we are sleeping. Smoke alarms are your first line of defense if fire should break out in your home. Maintain your smoke alarm by testing it at least monthly, changing the battery twice a year, and replacing the entire unit every ten years. If your smoke alarm has a ten year battery, it still should be checked regularly to make sure that it is still working.

For more information about home escape planning call the Hall County Fire Marshal's Office at (770) 531-6838