HOME FIRE SAFETY TIPS and HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS

Each year fires occurring during the holiday season cause millions of dollars in damages but more importantly, claims the lives of hundreds of people and injure even more. There are simple life-saving steps you can take to ensure a safe and happy holiday season. By following some of the outlined precautionary tips, individuals can greatly reduce their chances of becoming a holiday fire casualty.

The Taylor Fire Department – Fire Marshal Division would like to provide you with some helpful tips that may save you and your family. Being that there are so many topics in fire prevention and safety, I would encourage you to contact the Fire Marshal Division if there are any concerns you may have in making your home safer.

REMEMBER THIS WEEKEND IS “TURN BACK YOUR CLOCKS” – DON’T FORGET TO CHANGE YOUR BATTERIES AND TEST YOUR SMOKE DETECTORS

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Halloween Safety:

Children should:

- Go only to well-lit houses and remain on porches rather than entering houses.
- Travel in small groups and be accompanied by an adult.
- Know their phone number and carry coins for emergency telephone calls.
- Have their names and addresses attached to their costumes.
- Bring treats home before eating them so parents can inspect them.
- Use costume knives and swords that are flexible, not rigid or sharp.

When walking in neighborhoods, they should

- Use flashlights, stay on sidewalks, and avoid crossing yards.
- Cross streets at the corner, use crosswalks (where they exist), and do not cross between parked cars.
- Stop at all corners and stay together in a group before crossing.
- Wear clothing that is bright, reflective, and flame retardant.
- Consider using face paint instead of masks. (Masks can obstruct a child’s vision.)
- Avoid wearing hats that will slide over their eyes.
- Avoid wearing long, baggy or loose costumes or oversized shoes (to prevent tripping).
- Be reminded to look left, right, and left again before crossing the street.

Parents and adults should:

- Supervise the outing for children under age 12.
- Establish a curfew (a return time) for older children.
- Prepare homes for trick-or-treaters by clearing porches, lawns, and sidewalks and by placing jack-o-lanterns away from doorways and landings.
- Avoid giving choking hazards such as gum, peanuts, hard candies, or small toys as treats to young children.
- Inspect all candy for safety before children eat it.
- Parents and adults should ensure the safety of pedestrian trick-or-treaters
- Make sure children under age 10 are supervised as they cross the street.
- Drive slowly.
- Watch for children in the street and on medians.
- Exit driveways and alleyways carefully.
- Have children get out of cars on the curb side, not on the traffic side.
- And a few tips about pumpkins:
  - Carve pumpkins on stable, flat surfaces with good lighting.
  - Have children draw a face on the outside of the pumpkin, and then parents should do the cutting.
  - Place lighted pumpkins away from curtains and other flammable objects, and do not leave lighted pumpkins unattended.
Turkey fryers:

According to Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. (UL), the increasing number of fires related to turkey fryers is a risk that outweighs the benefits of the appliance. UL points to several common problems that can lead to fires and burns:

- The devices can easily tip over, spilling gallons of hot oil
- If the pot is overfilled, the oil may spill out when the turkey is added, causing the oil to ignite and a fire to engulf the unit
- If a partially frozen turkey is placed in the hot oil, a spillover effect can occur, which can also result in a fire
- Units with no thermostat controls can overheat the oil to the point of combustion (most do not have thermostat controls)
- The sides, lid and pot handles of the unit all get dangerously hot, posing severe burn hazards

As a result of these concerns and its own testing, to date UL has not certified any turkey fryer with the UL Mark.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), the majority of reported turkey fryer incidents occur while the oil is being heated.

To help reduce the fire and burn dangers associated with cooking with turkey fryers, follow this advice from CPSC and UL:

- Only use turkey fryers outdoors; away from any building or material that can catch fire; in full view
- Make sure there is at least two feet of space between the liquid propane tank and the fryer burner
- Keep children and pets well away from the fryer when in use and for several hours after cooking
- Never place the fryer on wooden decks or under a garage, carport, or breezeway
- Never leave the fryer unattended; monitor the temperature closely
- If any smoke at all comes from the heating pot of oil, turn the burner off immediately – this means the oil is overheated
- Cover bare skin and use pot holders
- Follow the manufacturer’s recommendation for the amount of oil to add; do not overfill the fryer
- Make sure the turkey is completely thawed and dried before adding to the oil; water and ice crystals can cause the oil to splatter or spill over

In Case of Fire

If you experience a fire, do not use water. Call 9-1-1 immediately. Never attempt to use water to extinguish a grease fire. While awaiting the fire department’s arrival, an all-purpose fire extinguisher can be used if you have one ready and know how to use it.

Treat a Burn

Treat a minor burn injury immediately with cool running water for 3-5 minutes. Do not apply ice, which can harm the skin. Do not apply butter or lotions, because this can keep the skin temperature hot, increasing the injury. Apply a sterile bandage to the injured area. If the burn is serious, seek medical treatment immediately.

If your clothing catches fire remember the phrase, “STOP, DROP and ROLL.” This can save your life and limit your burn injuries. Stop where you are. Drop to the floor. Roll over and over to smother the fire. If someone else’s clothing catches fire, help them by telling them to stop, drop and roll. If they attempt to run, use a heavy rug or blanket to try to stop them and use it to smother the flames if you can do so safely.
Preventing Christmas Tree Fires:

- **Christmas Tree Fire Hazards** - Special fire safety precautions need to be taken when keeping a live tree in the house. A burning tree can rapidly fill a room with fire and deadly gases.
- **Selecting a Tree for the Holiday**
  Needles on fresh trees should be green and hard to pull back from the branches, and the needle should not break if the tree has been freshly cut. The trunk should be sticky to the touch. Old trees can be identified by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground. If many needles fall off, the tree has been cut too long, has probably dried out, and is a fire hazard.
- **Caring for Your Tree**
  Do not place your tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks. Be careful not to drop or flick cigarette ashes near a tree. Do not put your live tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks. Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.
- **Disposing of Your Tree**
  Never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood-burning stove. When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly. The best way to dispose of your tree is by taking it to a recycling center or having it hauled away by a community pick-up service.

Holiday Lights

- **Maintain Your Holiday Lights**
  Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up. Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.
- **Do Not Overload Electrical Outlets**
  Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe. Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Make sure to periodically check the wires - they should not be warm to the touch.
- **Do Not Leave Holiday Lights on Unattended**

Holiday Decorations

- **Use Only Nonflammable Decorations**
  All decorations should be nonflammable or flame-retardant and placed away from heat vents.
- **Never Put Wrapping Paper in a Fireplace**
  It can result in a very large fire, throwing off dangerous sparks and embers and may result in a chimney fire.
- **Artificial Christmas Trees**
  If you are using a metallic or artificial tree, make sure it is flame retardant.
Candle Care

- **Avoid Using Lit Candles**
  If you do use them, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be easily knocked down. Never leave the house with candles burning.
- **Never Put Lit Candles on a Tree**
  Do not go near a Christmas tree with an open flame - candles, lighters or matches.

**Practice fire safety in your home:**

- Supervise young children closely. Do not leave them alone even for short periods of time.
- Keep matches and lighters in a secured drawer or cabinet.
- Have your children tell you when they find matches and lighters.
- Check under beds and in closets for burned matches, evidence your child may be playing with fire.
- Develop a home fire escape plan, practice it with your children and designate a meeting place outside.
- Take the mystery out of fire play by teaching children that fire is a tool, not a toy.
- Teach children the nature of fire. It is FAST, HOT, DARK and DEADLY.
- Teach children not to hide from firefighters, but to get out quickly and call for help from another location.
- Show children how to crawl low on the floor, below the smoke, to get out of the house and stay out in the case of fire.
- Demonstrate how to stop, drop to the ground and roll if their clothes catch fire.
- Install smoke alarms on every level in your home.
- Familiarize children with the sound of your smoke alarm.
- Test the smoke alarm each month and replace the battery at least twice a year.
- Replace the smoke alarm every ten years, or as recommended by the manufacturer.
Sources of Fire

Supplemental Home Heating

The use of supplemental room heaters, such as wood and coal burning stoves, kerosene heaters, gas space heaters and electrical heaters has decreased, along with the number of residential fires.

Even though there has been a decrease in fires associated with supplemental heaters, it is important to remember that about 120,000 residential fires still occur annually with the use of these heaters, or about 22 percent of all residential fires. These fires kill more than 600 people. Annually there are thousands of contact burn injuries and hundreds of carbon monoxide poisonings.

Wood Stoves

You should be able to respond “yes” to the following safety statements.

1. The wood stove or fireplace has been installed according to existing building codes and manufacturer’s instructions. ___ ___

2. The chimney and stovepipe are checked frequently during the heating season for creosote buildup and are cleaned when necessary. ___ ___

3. The stove sits on a non-combustible or on a code-specified or listed floor protector. ___ ___

4. Combustibles such as curtains, chairs, firewood, etc., are at least three feet away from the stove. ___ ___

5. Only proper fuel is used in the stove. ___ ___

6. A metal container with a tight-fitting lid is used for ash removal. ___ ___
Recommendations:

- Do not use wood burning stoves and fireplaces unless they are properly installed and meet building codes.
- Follow the label instructions on the stove which recommends an inspection twice monthly. Have chimneys inspected and cleaned by a professional chimney sweep. Creosote is an unavoidable product of wood burning stoves. Creosote builds up in chimney flues and can cause a chimney fire. To cut down on creosote buildup, avoid smoldering fires.
- Use a code-specified or listed floor protector. It should extend 18 inches beyond the stove on all sides. This will reduce the possibility of the floor being ignited.
- Follow the instructions on the stove label for proper location of the stove from combustible walls.
- Never burn trash in a stove because this could over heat the stove. Gasoline and other flammable liquids should never be used to start wood stove fires. Gasoline will ignite and explode. Use coal only if designated as appropriate by the manufacturer.

Kerosene Heaters

You should be able to respond "yes" to the following safety statements.

1. Only 1-K kerosene is used and it is bought from a dealer who can certify that the product is 1-K kerosene. ___ ___
2. The heater is placed out of the path of traffic areas such as doorways and hallways. ___ ___
3. Kerosene is stored outdoors, and out of the reach of children in a tightly sealed, preferably blue plastic or metal container, labeled "kerosene." ___ ___
4. No attempt is to be made to move the heater if flare-up (flames outside the heater cabinet) occurs. The fire department is called immediately. ___ ___
5. The heater is used in well ventilated rooms. ___ ___
6. The heater is turned off while sleeping and is never left operating unattended. ___ ___
7. The heater is placed at least three feet away from anything that might catch fire such as clothing, furniture, curtains, etc. ___ ___
Recommendations:

- Check with your local fire marshal regarding local and state codes and regulations for using a kerosene heater.
- **NEVER USE GASOLINE.** Even small amounts of gasoline mixed with kerosene can increase the risk of fire.
- Use properly labeled containers. It reduces the likelihood of mistaking gasoline for kerosene.
- Place heater so it will not be knocked over or trap you in case of fire.
- Use I-K kerosene because grades other than I-K contain much more sulfur and will increase sulfur dioxide emissions, posing a possible health problem. If you buy kerosene from a gasoline station make sure you and/or the attendant are using the kerosene pump, not the gasoline pump.
- Never fill the heater while it is operating. Always refuel the heater outdoors to prevent spillage on floors and rugs which could later result in fire ignition.
- Keep the room in which the heater operates ventilated (e.g. door open or the window ajar). This will prevent an indoor air pollution problem and minimize health problems. Kerosene heaters are not usually vented.
- Keep flammable liquids and fabrics away from an open flame.
- Never try to move the heater or try to smother the flames with a rug or a blanket if a flare-up occurs. Activate the manual shut-off switch and call the fire department. Moving the heater may increase the height of the flames and cause leakage resulting in personal injury.

**Gas-Fired Space Heaters**

You should be able to respond "yes" to the following safety statements.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Only vented heaters are installed or used in sleeping quarters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Vented heaters are properly vented to the outside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The unvented gas-fired room heater has a warning label and instructions that are followed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>The unvented gas-fired room heater has a label stating it has a &quot;pilot safety system&quot;, which turns off the gas if not enough fresh air is available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The vented heater has a label stating that it is equipped with a vent safety shutoff system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>If the heater uses liquefied petroleum (LP) gas, the container is located outside the house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>The manufacturer's instructions for lighting the pilot are followed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Matches are lighted before turning on the gas if pilot lighting is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Flammable materials and liquids are kept away from gas heating appliances.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommendations:

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions regarding where and how to use gas space heaters. Unvented heaters should not be used in small enclosed areas, especially bedrooms because of the potential for carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Do not use a propane heater (LP) which has a gas cylinder stored in the body of the heater. Its use is prohibited in most states and localities in the United States.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for lighting the pilot. Gas vapors may accumulate and ignite explosively, burning your hand or face.
- Light matches, if needed for lighting the pilot, before turning on the gas to prevent gas buildup.
- Do not operate a vented style heater unvented. It could allow combustion products, including carbon monoxide, to reach dangerous levels which will result in illness and death.

Portable Electric Heaters

The Commission estimates that half the deaths and one-third of the injuries resulting from electric heater fires occurred at night when family members were asleep and the heater unattended. The Commission is also concerned about the use of power or extension cords which can be too small to supply the amount of current required by the typical portable electric heater.

You should be able to respond "yes" to the following safety statements.

1. The heater is operated at least three feet away from upholstered furniture, drapes, bedding and other combustible materials.  
   - Yes  
   - No

2. The extension cord (if used) is marked #14 or #12 American Wire Gauge (AWG).  
   - Yes  
   - No

3. The heater is used on the floor.  
   - Yes  
   - No

4. The heater is turned off when family members leave the house or are sleeping.  
   - Yes  
   - No
Recommendations:

- Operate heater away from combustible materials. Do not place heaters where towels or the like could fall on the appliance and trigger a fire.
- Avoid using extension cords unless absolutely necessary. If you must use an extension cord with your electric heater, make sure it is marked with a power rating at least as high as that of the heater itself. Keep the cord stretched out. Do not permit the cord to become buried under carpeting or rugs. Do not place anything on top of the cord.
- Never place heaters on cabinets, tables, furniture or the like. Never use heaters to dry wearing apparel or shoes.

Cooking Equipment

Cooking equipment is estimated to be associated with more than 100,000 fires annually, and almost 400 deaths, and 5,000 injuries. Gas cooking equipment accounts for about 30,000 fires and electric cooking equipment for about 55,000 fires.

You should be able to respond "yes" to the following safety statements.

1. The storage area above the stove is free of flammable and combustible items.  
2. Short or tight fitting sleeves, and tight fitting shirts, robes, gowns, etc., are worn while cooking.  
3. Items that could attract children (e.g. cookies and candy) are not kept above the range and are kept out of the immediate area.  
4. The stove is not left unattended when cooking especially when the burner is turned to a high setting.
Recommendations:

- Never place or store pot holders, plastic utensils, towels and other non-cooking equipment on or near the range because these items can be ignited.
- Roll up or fasten long loose sleeves with pins or elastic bands while cooking. Do not reach across a range while cooking. Long loose sleeves are more likely to catch on fire than are short sleeves. Long loose sleeves are also more apt to catch on pot handles, overturning pots and pans and cause scalds.
- Do not place candy or cookies over top of ranges. This will reduce the attraction kids may have for climbing on cooking equipment, thus reducing the possibility of their clothing catching fire.
- Keep constant vigilance on any cooking that is require above the "keep warm" setting.

Cigarette Lighters and Matches

Each year more than 200 deaths are associated with fires started by cigarette lighters. About two thirds of these result from children playing with lighters. Most of the victims are under five years old.

You should be able to answer "yes" to the safety statements below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cigarette lighters and matches are kept out of the reach of children</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Cigarette lighters are never used to entertain a child.</td>
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</table>
Recommendations:

- Keep lighters and matches out of sight and out of the reach of children. Children as young as two years old are capable of lighting cigarette lighters and matches.
- Never encourage or allow a child to play with a lighter or to think of it as a toy. Do not use it as a source of amusement for a child. Once their curiosity is aroused, children may seek out a lighter and try to light it.
- Always check to see that cigarettes are extinguished before emptying ashtrays. Stubs that are still burning can ignite trash.

Materials That Burn

Your home is filled with materials and products that will burn if ignited. Upholstered furniture, clothing, drapery fabrics, and liquids such as gasoline and volatile solvents are involved in many injury-causing fires each year. Most of these fires could be prevented.

Upholstered Furniture

In 1989, there were 18,600 residential fires associated with upholstered furniture; about 900 people lost their lives. About one half of these fires were caused by smoking materials. Property losses amounted to over $100 million from fires started by cigarette ignition of upholstered furniture.

You should be able to respond “yes” to the safety statements below.

1. Upholstered furniture fabrics made from vinyl, wool or thermoplastic fibers are generally selected for safety reasons.  
   Yes  No

2. I check thoroughly after parties for ashes or unextinguished cigarettes that may have fallen behind and between cushions and under furniture.  
   Yes  No
Recommendations:

- Look for furniture designed to reduce the likelihood of furniture fire from cigarettes. Much of the furniture manufactured today has significantly greater resistance to ignition by cigarettes than upholstered furniture manufactured 10 to 15 years ago. This is particularly true of furniture manufactured to comply with the requirements of the Upholstered Furniture Action Council's (UFAC) Voluntary Action Program. Such upholstered furniture may be identified by the gold colored tag on the furniture item. The legend on the front of the tag in red letters states "Important Consumer Safety Information from UFAC."
- Always check the furniture where smokers have been sitting for improperly discarded smoking materials. Ashes and lighted cigarettes can fall unnoticed behind or between cushions or under furniture.
- Do not place or leave ashtrays on the arms of chairs where they can be knocked off.
- Look for fabrics made predominantly from thermo-plastic fibers (nylon, polyester, acrylic, and olefin) because they resist ignition by burning cigarettes better than cellulose fabrics (rayon or cotton). In general, the higher the thermoplastic content, the greater the resistance to cigarette ignition.

Mattresses and Bedding

Smoldering fires in mattresses and bedding materials caused by cigarettes are a major cause of deaths in residential fires. In 1989 over 35,000 mattress/bedding fires caused about 700 deaths.

You should be able to respond "yes" to the following safety statements.

1. "No smoking in bed" is a rule that is practiced in my home.  

2. Heaters, ashtrays, smoking materials and other fire sources are located away from bedding.

Recommendations:

- **DO NOT** smoke in bed. Smoking in bed is a major cause of accidental fire deaths in homes.
- Locate heaters or other fire sources three feet from the bed to prevent the bed catching on fire.
- Consider replacing your old mattress with a new one if you are a smoker. Mattresses manufactured since 1973 are required to resist cigarette ignition.
**Wearing Apparel**

Most fibers used in clothing can burn, some more quickly than others. A significant number of clothing fires occur in the over 65 age group principally from nightwear (robes, pajamas, nightgowns). In 1989 about 200 clothing fire deaths were reported; about three fourths occurred in the 65 and older age group. The severity of apparel burns is high. Hospital stays average over one month.

Small open flames, including matches, cigarette lighters, and candles are the major sources of clothing ignition. These are followed by ranges, open fires and space heaters. The most commonly worn garments that are associated with clothing ignition injuries are pajamas, nightgowns, robes, shirts/blouses, pants/slacks and dresses.

You should be able to respond "yes" to the following statements.

1. When purchasing wearing apparel, I consider fiber content and fabric construction for safety purposes.  
   Yes  No
2. I purchase garments for my children that are intended for sleepwear since they are made to be flame resistant.  
   Yes  No

**Recommendations:**

- Consider purchasing fabrics such as 100% polyester, nylon, wool and silk that are difficult to ignite and tend to self extinguish.
- Consider the flammability of certain fabrics containing cotton, cotton/polyester blends, rayon, and acrylic. These are relatively easy to ignite and burn rapidly.
- Look at fabric construction. It also affects ignitability. Tight weaves or knits and fabrics without a fuzzy or napped surface are less likely to ignite and burn rapidly than open knits or weaves, or fabrics with brushed or piled surfaces.
- Consider purchasing garments that can be removed without having to pull them over the head. Clothes that are easily removed can help prevent serious burns. If a garment can be quickly stripped off when it catches fire, injury will be far less severe or avoided altogether.
- Follow manufacturer's care and cleaning instructions on products labeled "flame resistant" to ensure that their flame resistant properties are maintained.

**Flammable Liquids**

One of the major causes of household fires is flammable liquids. These include gasoline, acetone benzene, lacquer thinner, alcohol, turpentine, contact cements, paint thinner, kerosene, and charcoal lighter fluid. The most dangerous of all is gasoline.

You should be able to respond "yes" to the following safety statements.

1. Flammable liquids are stored in properly labeled, tightly closed non-glass containers.  
   Yes  No
2. These products are stored away from heaters, furnaces, water heaters, ranges, and other gas appliances.  
   Yes  No
3. Flammable liquids are stored out of reach of children.  
   Yes  No
Recommendation:

- Take extra precautions in storing and using flammable liquids, such as gasoline, paint thinners, etc. They produce invisible explosive vapors that can ignite by a small spark at considerable distances from the flammable substance. Store outside the house.

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**Early Warning and Escape**

Even when you have complied with every item in this Home Fire Safety Checklist, you still need to have a plan for early warning and escape in case a fire does occur.

Many fire deaths and fire injuries are actually caused by smoke and gases. Victims inhale smoke and poisonous gases that rise ahead of the flames. Survival depends on being warned as early as possible and having an escape plan.

You should be able to respond "yes" to the following statements.

**Smoke Detectors**

1. At least one smoke detector is located on every floor of my home.  
   - Yes  
   - No  

2. Smoke detectors are placed near bedrooms, either on the ceiling or 6-12 inches below the ceiling on the wall.  
   - Yes  
   - No  

3. Smoke detectors are tested according to manufacturer's instructions on a regular basis (at least once a month) and are kept in working condition at all times.  
   - Yes  
   - No  

4. Batteries are replaced according to manufacturer's instructions, at least annually.  
   - Yes  
   - No  

5. Batteries are never disconnected.  
   - Yes  
   - No  

6. The detector has a distinct warning signal that can be heard whether asleep or awake.  
   - Yes  
   - No
Make sure detectors are placed either on the ceiling or 6-12 inches below the ceiling on the wall. Locate smoke detectors away from air vents or registers; high air flow or "dead" spots are to be avoided.

Recommendations:

- Purchase a smoke detector if you do not have one. Smoke detectors are inexpensive and are required by law in many localities. Check local codes and regulations before you buy your smoke detector because some codes require specific types of detectors. They provide an early warning which is critical because the longer the delay, the deadlier the consequences.
- Read the instructions that come with the detector for advice on the best place to install it. As a minimum detectors should be located near bedrooms and one on every floor.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for proper maintenance. Smoke detectors can save lives, but only if properly installed and maintained.
- Never disconnect a detector. Consider relocating the detector rather than disconnecting it if it is subject to nuisance alarms, e.g. from cooking.
- Replace the battery annually, or when a "chirping" sound is heard.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions about cleaning your detector. Excessive dust, grease or other material in the detector may cause it to operate abnormally. Vacuum the grill work of your detector.

Escape Plan

Planning ahead, rehearsing, thinking, and acting clearly are keys to surviving a fire. How prepare are you?

You should be able to respond "yes" to the following statements.

1. The family has an escape plan and an alternate escape plan.  
   Yes  No
2. Escape routes and plans are rehearsed periodically.  
   Yes  No
3. The escape plan includes choosing a place safely outside the house where the family can meet to be sure everyone got out safely.  
   Yes  No
4. At least two exits from each part of the house are established.  
   Yes  No
5. The fire department number is posted on every telephone.  
   Yes  No
**Recommendations:**

Establish advanced family planning for escape. It is an important partner with smoke detectors and it will prepare you for a fire emergency.

Include small children as a part of the discussion and rehearsal. It is especially important to make sure they understand that they must escape; they can't hide from fire under a bed or in a closet.

**Your life and that of your family can be saved by foresight, planning, discussing and rehearsal.**

**Information about Home Fire Escape Planning**

- Children as young as three years old can follow a fire escape plan they have practiced often. Yet, many families don't have detailed escape plans, and those that do usually don't practice them.
- Practicing a fire escape plan and fire-safe behaviors on a regular basis can mean the difference between life and death.
- Draw a basic diagram of your home, marking all windows and doors, and plan two routes of escape out of each room. Consider various fire scenarios when creating your plan and develop actions for a safe escape. Plan for each member of your family, including babies and toddlers who may be unable to escape on their own.
- Keep exits clear of debris and toys.
- Keep your child's bedroom door closed. If a hallway fire occurs, a closed door may hinder the smoke from overpowering your baby or toddler, giving firefighters extra time for rescue.
- Teach toddlers not to hide from firefighters. Their uniforms can be scary in times of crisis. Teach children that firefighters are there to help in an emergency. Take children for a tour at your local fire station so that they can see a firefighter in full gear.
- Teach your children how to crawl under the smoke to reduce smoke inhalation.
- Also, teach your children how to touch closed doors to see if they are hot before opening. If so, use an alternate escape route.
- Have a safe meeting place outside the home and teach children never to go back inside.

**Practicing fire-safe behaviors and knowing what to do in an emergency can give your family extra seconds to escape.**
Fire Escape Plan
PREPARE. PRACTICE. PREVENT THE UNTHINKABLE.
A Fire Safety Campaign for Babies and Toddlers

Use the grid above to PREPARE your fire escape plan. Draw a floor plan of your home, including all windows and doors, and label each sleeping area. Indicate all working smoke alarms, which should be located on every floor of your home and outside of sleeping areas. Plan two routes of escape from every room and mark your family meeting spot, located safely away from your home. Post the escape plans on each level of your home and in locations where overnight guests and caretakers can easily see it. Most importantly, PRACTICE your fire escape plan regularly, at least twice a year. If you prepare and practice, you can PREVENT THE UNTHINKABLE.