

SAFETY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Talk to someone about what you should do in case of fire. Your family, friends, the fire department or a social service agency should help you develop an escape plan you can practice. Be sure to practice with the people who live nearby. Their assistance and correct actions may be critical in helping you successfully escape a fire. Use the following tips to help prevent fires and injuries.

Live Near an Exit

If you live in an apartment, try to occupy one on the ground floor. If you're in a two-story house, arrange to sleep on the first floor, and be sure to have a telephone by your bed. Being closer to the ground and an exit will facilitate your escape in a fire. If necessary, have a ramp constructed for emergency exits.

Install Smoke Detectors

Working detectors can mean the critical difference in a fire. Test your alarms monthly and change batteries at least once a year.

Know the Number

Memorize the fire department number and tape it to all your telephones. Make sure your home is clearly numbered and, if you have a disability, you might let the fire department know about your special needs. In case of fire, always get out first, if you can, then call the fire department. If you are trapped inside, give the dispatcher your exact room location.

Plan Your Escape

Know two ways out of every room. If one is a window, know how to open it and make sure it opens easily. If you live in an apartment, know where the exit stairs are. Never take an elevator - it might take you to the fire!

WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF A FIRE...

Get Out, Stay Out

Go as quickly as possible, leaving all possessions behind, and never go back in - you might not get back out. Call the fire department from outside.

Crawl Low in Smoke

If you can, crawl low while you exit. Smoke rises and cleaner air is nearer the floor.

Stop, Drop and Roll

If your clothes catch fire, let yourself down and roll. This will smother the fire. If you have physical limitations, someone else may need to smother the fire with a blanket or rug. Fanning the flames with your hands will not help, in fact, your hands may be severely burned.

OTHER SAFETY TIPS

Cool a Burn

Your best first aid is cool water which helps prevent further skin damage. Keep running cool water on burns until the pain stops. Salve or butter only traps in heat. If charred skin or blisters appear, seek medical attention immediately.

Keep Doors Closed

Always sleep with your bedroom door closed, making sure the smoke alarm is audible or that you have an emergency light to alert you. If you hear your detector alarm, smell smoke or suspect fire, feel the door. If hot, try your other exit; if not, slowly open it but be prepared to close it if smoke or flames rush in.

If You Are Trapped

Put closed doors between you and the fire. Stuff cracks and cover vents to keep smoke out. If there is a phone in the room, call the fire department and let them know you are trapped. Give them your exact location. Keeping low, put a wet cloth over your nose and wait at the window, signaling with a sheet or flashlight. Do not break the window.

Check Out Appliances

Make sure all plugs and cords are in good condition, and repair or replace any worn or broken appliances.

Be Kitchen Wise

Be especially careful in lighting matches or using the stove. Wear close-fitting sleeves when you cook. If a pan catches fire, smother it with a lid.

Give Space Heaters Space

Keep space heaters at least three feet from everything - especially you. A slight brush against certain models could cause a clothing fire.

Be Smoker Wary

Always have large, deep ashtrays around for smokers. And do not empty ashes into wastebaskets until they're soaked in water. Check upholstered furniture for dropped cigarettes or matches. And never smoke in bed or while on medication that might cause drowsiness.