

Smoke Detectors

Smoke Alarms at Home

SMOKE ALARMS ARE A KEY PART of a home fire escape plan. When there is a fire, smoke spreads fast. Working smoke alarms give you early warning so you can get outside quickly.



SAFETY TIPS

- » Install smoke alarms inside and outside each bedroom and sleeping area. Install alarms on every level of the home. Install alarms in the basement.
- » Large homes may need extra smoke alarms.
- » It is best to use interconnected smoke alarms. When one smoke alarm sounds they all sound.
- » Test all smoke alarms at least once a month. Press the test button to be sure the alarm is working.
- » There are two kinds of alarms. Ionization smoke alarms are quicker to warn about flaming fires. Photoelectric alarms are quicker to warn about smoldering fires. It is best to use both types of alarms in the home.
- » A smoke alarm should be on the ceiling or high on a wall. Keep smoke alarms away from the kitchen to reduce false alarms. They should be at least 10 feet (3 meters) from the stove.
- » People who are hard-of-hearing or deaf can use special alarms. These alarms have strobe lights and bed shakers.
- » Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.

FACTS

- ! Smoke alarms should be installed inside every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level. Smoke alarms should be connected so when one sounds, they all sound. Most homes do not have this level of protection.
- ! Roughly 2 out of 3 fire deaths happen in homes with no smoke alarms or the alarms are not working.



Your Source for SAFETY Information www.nfpa.org/education
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Plan your escape

Your ability to get out of your house during a fire depends on advance warning from smoke alarms and advance planning.

Get everyone in your household together and make a [home fire escape plan](#). Walk through your home and look for two ways out of every room.

Make sure escape routes are clear of debris and doors and windows open easily. Windows with security bars or grills should have an emergency release device.

Plan an outside meeting place where everyone will meet once they have escaped. A good meeting place is something permanent, like a tree, light pole, or mailbox a safe distance in front of the home.

If there are infants, older adults, family members with mobility limitations or children who do not wake to the sound of the smoke alarm, make sure that someone is assigned to assist them in the event of an emergency.

If the smoke alarm sounds, get outside and stay outside. Respond quickly – get up and go, remember to know two ways out of every room, get yourself outside quickly, and go to your outside meeting place with your family.

Children and smoke alarms

The NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) is aware of research indicating that sleeping children don't always awake when a smoke alarm activates. While this is a concern, we shouldn't allow this to obscure the fact that smoke alarms are highly effective at reducing fire deaths and injuries.

Every home fire escape plan is different, and every family should know who will - and who will not - awaken at the sound of the smoke detector. It is recommended that you practice your home fire escape plan, at least once, at night while everyone is asleep. If someone doesn't wake up when the alarm sounds during a drill, the family should design an escape plan that assigns a grown-up who is easily awakened by the alarm to wake the heavy sleepers, perhaps by yelling "FIRE," pounding on the wall or door, or blowing a whistle.