Be Red Cross Ready

Fire Prevention & Safety Checklist

The most effective way to protect yourself and your home from fire is to identify and remove fire hazards. Sixty-five percent of home fire deaths occur in homes with no working smoke alarms. During a home fire, working smoke alarms and a fire escape plan that has been practiced regularly can save lives.

- **If a fire occurs in your home, GET OUT, STAY OUT and CALL for help.**
- **Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas. Test them every month and replace the batteries at least once a year.**
- **Talk with all household members about a fire escape plan and practice the plan twice a year.**

Prevent home fires

Steps You Can Take Now

- ❑ Keep items that can catch on fire at least three feet away from anything that gets hot, such as space heaters.
- ❑ Never smoke in bed.
- ❑ Talk to children regularly about the dangers of fire, matches and lighters and keep them out of reach.
- ❑ Turn portable heaters off when you leave the room or go to sleep.

Cooking Safely

- ❑ Stay in the kitchen when frying, grilling or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- ❑ Stay in the home while simmering, baking, roasting or boiling food. Check it regularly and use a timer to remind you that food is cooking.
- ❑ Keep anything that can catch fire—like pot holders, towels, plastic and clothing—away from the stove.
- ❑ Keep pets off cooking surfaces and countertops to prevent them from knocking things onto the burner.

Caution: Carbon Monoxide Kills

- ❑ Install carbon monoxide alarms in central locations on every level of your home and outside sleeping areas.
- ❑ If the carbon monoxide alarm sounds, move quickly to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window or door.
- ❑ Never use a generator, grill, camp stove or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices inside a home, garage, basement, crawlspace or any partially enclosed area.

Practice fire safety at home

Smoke Alarms

- ❑ Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas.
- ❑ Teach children what smoke alarms sound like and what to do when they hear one.
- ❑ Once a month check whether each alarm in the home is working properly by pushing the test button.
- ❑ Replace batteries in smoke alarms at least once a year. Immediately install a new battery if an alarm chirps, warning the battery is low.
- ❑ Smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years. Never disable smoke or carbon monoxide alarms.
- ❑ Carbon monoxide alarms are not substitutes for smoke alarms. Know the difference between the sound of smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms.

Fire Escape Planning

- ❑ Ensure that all household members know two ways to escape from every room of your home.
- ❑ Make sure everyone knows where to meet outside in case of fire.
- ❑ Practice escaping from your home at least twice a year and at different times of the day. Practice waking up to smoke alarms, low crawling and meeting outside. Make sure everyone knows how to call 9-1-1.
- ❑ Teach household members to STOP, DROP and ROLL if their clothes should catch on fire.

In case of fire ...

Follow Your Escape Plan!

Remember to GET OUT, STAY OUT and CALL 9-1-1 or your local emergency phone number.

- ❑ If closed doors or handles are warm, use your second way out. Never open doors that are warm to the touch.
- ❑ Crawl low under smoke.
- ❑ Go to your outside meeting place and then call for help.
- ❑ If smoke, heat or flames block your exit routes, stay in the room with doors closed. Place a wet towel under the door and call the fire department or 9-1-1. Open a window and wave a brightly colored cloth or flashlight to signal for help.

Use Caution with Fire Extinguishers

- ❑ Use a portable fire extinguisher ONLY if you have been trained by the fire department and in the following conditions:
  - The fire is confined to a small area, and is not growing.
  - The room is not filled with smoke.
  - Everyone has exited the building.
  - The fire department has been called.
- ❑ Remember the word PASS when using a fire extinguisher.
  - Pull the pin and hold the extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from you.
  - Aim low. Point the extinguisher at the base of the fire.
  - Squeeze the lever slowly and evenly.
  - Sweep the nozzle from side to side.

Let Your Family Know You're Safe

If you experience a home fire or any disaster, register on the American Red Cross Safe and Well Web site available through RedCross.org to let your family and friends know about your welfare. If you don't have Internet access, call 1-866-GET-INFO to register yourself and your family.

American Red Cross

For more information on disaster and emergency preparedness, visit RedCross.org.

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