



# FIRE! Prepare to Survive



If a fire breaks out in your home, you may have less than two minutes to escape before it's engulfed in flames. How can you be sure you and your family will know what to do? We encourage you to **PREPARE, PREVENT & PRACTICE** so you are ready if a fire occurs.

## PREPARE...

### Working Smoke Detectors

- ◇ Test your detectors monthly by pressing the test button and listening for the alarm.
- ◇ Change the detector batteries twice a year. Consider doing this at the same time you change your clocks in the spring and fall.
- ◇ NEVER disable a smoke detector – only WORKING smoke detectors save lives!
- ◇ Consider retrofitting with smoke detectors featuring batteries that can last up to 10 years.

### Home Escape Plan (also see “PRACTICE” on back)

- ◇ Draw a diagram of your house showing doors and windows.
- ◇ Determine two escape routes out of every room.
- ◇ Identify an outdoor meeting place a safe distance from where everyone will report (e.g., mailbox)
- ◇ Teach everyone to “Get Out and Stay Out!” – to never re-enter building for any reason.
- ◇ Teach everyone to call 9-1-1 from a neighbor's home.

### Visible Address

- ◇ Be sure your address is marked clearly and is visible from the street so emergency crews can find your house quickly.

## PREVENT...

### Heating Equipment

- ◇ Never use charcoal or unvented appliances in your home.
- ◇ Clean/service your chimneys and heating systems annually.
- ◇ Keep combustibles at least 18 inches away from baseboard and portable heaters. Never leave a portable heater unattended in a room or around children.

### Smoking/Ashes

- ◇ Never smoke in bed!
- ◇ Extinguish smoking materials in sturdy, non-tip ashtrays – do not throw them into trash cans, shrubbery, or barkdust.
- ◇ Dispose of hot ashes and briquettes in metal containers, not in paper bags, cardboard boxes, trash cans, or plastic buckets. Keep containers of hot ashes and briquettes outside, far away from the side of the house and off of wood decks and patios. Briquettes and ashes can stay hot for several days.



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**PREVENT, cont'd...**

***Matches and Lighters***

- ◇ **KIDS + MATCHES/LIGHTERS = FIRE!** Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children.
- ◇ Teach children to tell an adult when they find matches or lighters, and that those items are not toys.
- ◇ Do not allow children to use matches or lighters to light candles, especially in their bedrooms.
- ◇ Consider only lighters with child-resistant features.

***Cooking***

- ◇ Never leave the room when using burners, especially when warming food. Fats and greases are highly susceptible to ignition if left unattended. In case of a grease or pan fire, smother the fire with the lid to the pan or use an extinguisher. **NEVER** throw water on a grease fire.
- ◇ Keep combustibles away from cooking surfaces – even if the heating elements are not in use. Do not store extra pans or combustibles in the oven.

***Electrical Safety***

- ◇ Extension cords should not be used in place of permanent wiring.
- ◇ Do not overload plugs or extension cords! If you cannot avoid using a number of power cords, be sure to use power strips with circuit breakers
- ◇ Unplug small appliances, like toasters and curling irons, when not in use.
- ◇ Do not overlook tripped circuit breakers, as they may be an indication of a dangerous situation.

***Flammable Liquids***

- ◇ Store paint, paint thinner, gasoline, and other flammable liquids outside your dwelling and away from heat sources.
- ◇ Rags or combustibles soaked with flammable liquids should be discarded in metal containers with lids, not trash cans, to prevent spontaneous ignition.

***PRACTICE... Panic can slow you down – know what to do and how to do it!***

***Crawl Low Under Smoke!***

- ◇ When you test your detectors, discuss what the alarm means. Teach family members to crawl low along the floor in a smoke-filled room – the “good air” is near the floor. Spread out a sheet and shake it a couple of feet above the ground to simulate smoke and have everyone crawl very low under it. Don’t forget to practice crawling down the stairs – feet first for safety!

***Hold Regular fire drills to practice your home escape plan***

- ◇ Practice crawling low under smoke and escaping via windows, especially using fire escape ladders.
- ◇ Be sure to include meeting at the designated point and going to a neighbor’s home as if calling the 9-1-1 operator.
- ◇ Keep track of how quickly you clear the house – try to be as fast as possible! Remember, you may have less than two minutes to escape!
- ◇ Mix it up...practice a variety of scenarios, just in case!

***Contact the Scio Fire District for more information on preventing and surviving a fire in your home: (503) 394-3000***