

Escape Planning & Life-Saving Devices



According to the United States Fire Administration, each year more than 4,000 Americans die in fires and 20,000 are injured. In Virginia, 100 civilians died in fires and 443 were injured during the 2006 calendar year. Sadly, most of these fatalities and injuries may have been prevented with early warning devices, such as working smoke alarms and fire escape planning.

The good news is there are time tested ways to prevent and survive a fire. It is not a question of luck, but rather a matter of planning ahead. To fire proof your household and plan for the unthinkable, the Virginia Department of Fire Programs recommend the following:

Home Fire Escape Planning

- Practice finding your way out of the house with your eyes closed, crawling or staying low and feeling your way out of the house.
- Never open doors that are hot to the touch.
- Teach your family to stop, drop to the ground and roll if their clothes catch fire.
- Make sure everyone in your family knows at least two ways to escape from each room in the house.
- Make sure everyone in the family understands and practices how to properly operate and open locked or barred doors and windows.
- Designate a meeting place outside and take attendance. Get out and stay out.
- Remember to escape first, then notify the fire department.
- Finally, practice makes perfect! Practice your home fire escape plan every month.

Smoke Alarms Save Lives

- Working smoke alarms save lives and can double your chances of surviving a fire.
- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home.
- Test your smoke alarm monthly.
- Clean your smoke alarm often. Keep it free of dust and replace the battery at least twice a year. Remember, improperly working smoke, especially alarms with missing batteries, can not warn you of danger!

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VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF FIRE PROGRAMS

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Carbon Monoxide Alarms – Exposing the Silent Killer

- CO gas comes from several sources, such as gas-fired appliances, charcoal grills, wood-burning furnaces or fireplaces and motor vehicles.
- Everyone is at risk for CO poisoning, particularly unborn babies, infants, children and senior citizens.
- To protect your family from CO poisoning remember to install CO alarms near sleeping areas and on each floor.
- Remember to have a qualified professional check all fuel burning appliances, furnaces, venting and chimney systems once a year.
- Never use a range oven to help heat your home.
- Never use a charcoal grill in your home or garage.
- Never keep a car running in a garage.
- When purchasing a new home, have a qualified technician evaluate the integrity of the heating and cooking system.

Sprinklers

- The combination of working smoke alarms and home fire sprinklers reduces the likelihood of death from fire by more than 80 percent.
- Fire sprinkler systems offer the optimum level of fire safety because they control the fire immediately in the room of origin, help limit the spread of fire, and often extinguish it before the fire departments arrives.
- Families with children, senior citizens, and physically impaired members have special fire protection needs. Home fire sprinkler systems provide added protection for these people.

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