
CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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Home Fire Escape Planning Can Make the Difference Between Life and Death

Sacramento - In two minutes you can ride an elevator to the top of the Empire State Building or make a pot of coffee. It's also the amount of time it takes to get out of your house alive in a fire! Fire can spread rapidly through your home, leaving you as little as one or two minutes to escape safely once the smoke alarm sounds.

“Your ability to get out depends on advance warning from working smoke alarms and planning,” said State Fire Marshal Tonya L. Hoover, CAL FIRE-Office of the State Fire Marshal. “Practice before a fire; your life can depend on it.” According to the NFPA, only one in three American households have actually developed and practiced a home fire escape plan. While 71% of Americans have an escape plan in case of a fire, only 47% of those have practiced it. If a fire breaks out in your home, you need to know what to do and where to go if there is a fire.

Practice Your Plan & Have Working Smoke Alarms in Your Home!

- Draw a map of each level of the home. Show two ways out of every room.
- Have a safe outside meeting place like a mailbox, tree, or light.
- Call the fire department from outside your home.
- Practice your plan twice a year in the day and at night to make sure that children and adults hear the alarm and know what to do when the smoke alarm sounds.
- Children, older adults, and people with disabilities may need assistance to wake up and get out. Make sure there is a plan to help them get out.
- Install smoke alarms inside every sleeping area, in hallways outside of sleeping areas and on every level of your home. Test your smoke alarm once a month by pushing the button and hearing the sound.

Crawl Low & Go – Once You Are Out, Stay Out!

- Crawl on your hands and knees, keeping your head 12-24 inches above the floor and crawl outside to your meeting place.
- Before opening a door, feel the doorknob and then the door. If either is hot, leave the door closed and use your second way out.
- **Once you are out, stay out!**
- If people are trapped, firefighters have the best chance of rescuing them. Firefighters have the training, experience and protective equipment needed to enter burning buildings.

For more information, visit www.fire.ca.gov.

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