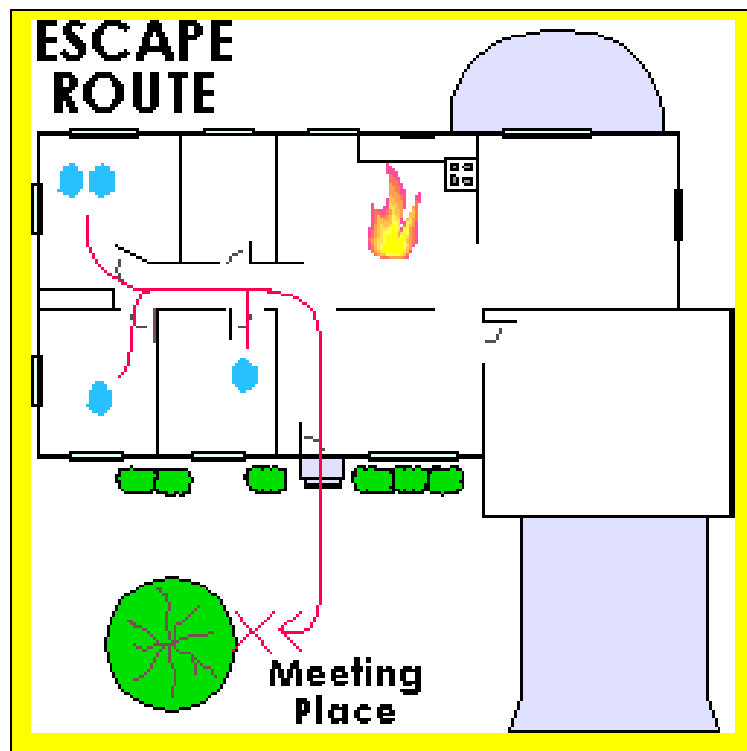


# Exit Drills In The Home



Install smoke detectors in your home - In a fire, you may only have seconds to make your escape. A smoke detector will give you early warning, or even wake you up so you can get out quickly.

- ◆ Smoke detectors should be installed on every level of your home, in all bedrooms, and in the area outside of the bedrooms.
- ◆ Smoke detectors must be tested frequently (at least once a month). You should use the smoke detectors to practice fire drills by simply pressing the test button.
- ◆ "Change your clocks, change your batteries!" Change your smoke detector batteries in the spring when you set your clocks forward and in the fall when you set your clocks back. This will help insure they work when you need them.
- ◆ Keep a whistle in every bedroom to augment the alarm to help every one in the family wake up.

Develop an escape plan - Sit down with your family and discuss the escape plan and their role in developing it.

- ◆ Develop a floor plan of your home.
- ◆ Show two escape routes from every room in your home.
- ◆ If collapsible escape ladders are needed, show their location.
- ◆ If security bars are installed, show the location of the quick release devices.
- ◆ A flashlight should be available in every bedroom. The type that plugs into the power outlet and is constantly charged is recommended.

- ◆ Check windows to make sure they open freely, and screens can be removed easily.
- ◆ Make sure your second exit (a window) is not obstructed by items such as air conditioning units. Don't "board up windows that could be needed as a second means of escape during a fire.
- ◆ Your family should always sleep with the doors closed to keep smoke out of their bedrooms and give them more time.
- ◆ Explain that they must "roll out of bed". Get on the floor as soon as they hear the smoke detector, underneath the smoke, heat and toxic gases. Even if no smoke is visible, deadly heat and toxic gases could be present, so keep low.
- ◆ They must "crawl low under smoke" to their nearest exit.
- ◆ When they get to the closed door they should check the door to see if it's hot. If the doors hot they should use their secondary exit.
- ◆ Show the location of the pre-arranged meeting place that everyone will meet at once outside.
- ◆ Make sure your escape ladder is assembled, and that you have tested its use prior to needing it because of a fire.
- ◆ Don't count on being able to help your children escape a fire. You may not be able to reach your children because of the location of the fire, they must know how to:
  - A) Release any installed security bars
  - B) Open their window
  - C) Knock out the window screen
  - D) Set up the escape ladder
  - E) Make their escape

**Practice your escape Plan** - Practice your escape plan frequently, at least once a month. Fires can grow quickly; you may only have seconds to exit your home.

- ◆ Time your drills. See if you improve over past drills.
- ◆ Drills should be practiced in the dark so that your family is prepared for actual fire conditions.
- ◆ Practice opening security bars and windows.
- ◆ Practice setting up and using escape ladders.
- ◆ Practice crawling low in smoke and checking doors for heat.
- ◆ You have no time! Do not try to take possessions or look for pets.

**Have a pre-arranged meeting place** - A meeting place is needed so that everyone can be accounted for.

- ◆ Designate a meeting place. It can be the mail box, the tree in the front yard, or any other place you decide as long as everyone in the family knows in advance where it is. Make sure it's a safe distance from your home.

**Once out, stay out** - Never go back in the house for anything or anyone.

- ◆ Call 911 from a neighbor's house. Give the operator your address, name, call back number and let them know if there is anyone still in the house.