

## Fire Prevention Week: How to Get Your Home and Family Organized

“Not Every Hero Wears a Cape. Plan and Practice Your Escape!™” is the theme of Fire Prevention Week, which begins on Sunday, October 6. People are at the greatest risk from fire in their own homes, and in a typical home fire, you may have as little as one to two minutes to escape safely from the time the smoke alarm sounds.

In the U.S., there were 2,630 deaths and 10,600 injuries from home fires in 2017. While the concept of a home fire is frightening, there are things you can do to get organized in order to stop a fire before it starts and keep your home and family safe.

### ○ Install Smoke Detectors and Carbon Monoxide Detectors

1. Install smoke detectors and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms on every floor and near every bedroom. CO is an odorless, invisible and deadly gas that can only be detected by a CO alarm.
2. Set a monthly reminder on your smartphone calendar to test all alarms.
3. When you change your clocks for daylight savings time, replace batteries in all alarms.
4. Replace smoke and CO alarms every 10 years.

### ○ Install Fire Extinguishers

1. Keep fire extinguishers readily accessible throughout your home, including in the kitchen, garage, and any workshop areas.
2. Check fire extinguishers regularly to ensure they are working properly.

### ○ Create an Escape Plan

1. Create a home fire escape plan, then practice with everyone in the household at least twice a year, during the day and at night. This template can help.
2. Ensure all household members know two ways to escape from every room and know where the family meeting spot is outside of your home.
3. Be sure to include your pets in your plan and practice taking them with you.
4. Emphasize “Get Out, Stay Out.” Only professional firefighters should enter a building that is on fire, even if other family members, pets or prized possessions are inside.

### ○ Teach Kids How to React in the Event of a Fire

1. Over 100,000 fires are set every year by kids under 5 years old playing with lighters or matches. Take the mystery out of fire by teaching children that fire is a tool, not a toy.
2. Teach children what smoke and CO alarms sound like and what to do when they hear one.
3. Teach them to STOP, DROP, and ROLL if their clothes catch fire.
4. It’s important to teach children to escape on their own in case adults can’t help them.



5. Make sure kids know their address to how to call 9-1-1 from a cell phone or a neighbor's phone. While emergency operators can estimate your location based on signals from cell towers, firefighters still need an exact address.
6. Teach kids about what firefighters do, and to not hide from them when they are in sight.

### **Cooking**

1. Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short time, turn off the stove.
2. Keep children away from cooking areas by enforcing a "kid-free zone" of 3 feet around the stove.
3. Position barbecue grills at least 10 feet away from siding and deck railings, and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.

### **Smoking**

1. Smoke outside and completely stub out butts in an ashtray or a can filled with sand.
2. Soak cigarette butts and ashes in water before throwing them away. Never toss hot cigarette butts or ashes in the trash can.
3. Never smoke in a home where oxygen is used, even if it is turned off. Oxygen can be explosive and makes fire burn hotter and faster.
4. Don't smoke in bed! If you are sleepy, have been drinking, or have taken medicine that makes you drowsy, put your cigarette out first.

### **Electrical and Appliance Safety**

1. Frayed wires can cause fires. Replace all worn, old or damaged appliance cords immediately and do not run cords under rugs or furniture.
2. If an appliance has a three-prong plug, use it only in a three-slot outlet. Never force it to fit into a two-slot outlet or extension cord.
3. Immediately shut off, then professionally replace, light switches that are hot to the touch and lights that flicker.

### **Portable Space Heaters and Generators**

1. Keep combustible objects at least three feet away from portable heating devices.
2. Ensure the portable heater has a thermostat control mechanism and will switch off automatically if the heater falls over.
3. Only use crystal clear K-1 kerosene in kerosene heaters. Never overfill it and only use it in a well-ventilated room.
4. Portable generators should never be used indoors and should only be refueled outdoors or in well ventilated areas.



### ○ Fireplaces and Woodstoves

1. Inspect and clean woodstove pipes and chimneys annually and check monthly for damage or obstructions.
2. Use a fireplace screen heavy enough to stop rolling logs and big enough to cover the entire opening of the fireplace to catch flying sparks.
3. Make sure the fire is completely out before leaving the house or going to bed.

### ○ General Tips

1. Remove the clutter from your home, making hallways and doorways accessible and clear of any debris.
2. Make digital copies of valuable documents and records like birth certificates, medications, etc. and keep them in a safe place easily retrievable in the event of a fire.
3. Never use a stove, range or oven to heat your home.
4. Keep combustible and flammable liquids away from heat sources.
5. Close bedroom doors. House fires spread quickly when there are no barriers. Something as simple as closing bedroom doors at night can create passive fire protection that buys precious seconds when it counts.

While these fire safety tips may seem like common sense, they're easy to overlook when you're busy or stressed. You can never play it too safe when it comes to fire prevention at home. Taking the necessary measures will not only save a ton of hassle and your precious belongings, but also your loved ones!

For more information about Fire Prevention Week and how to organize a home escape plan, visit [www.fpw.org](http://www.fpw.org).

Need help? ARRANGED will implement a plan to declutter and professionally organize your home in a functional, aesthetically pleasing way!!

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