



# Fire Prevention Canada

Working with the private and public sectors to achieve  
fire safety through education

## FIRE ESCAPE PLAN

### At Work

#### Do you know

- Your Fire Department's emergency number?
- Your fire escape plan?
- Your designated meeting place in the event of a fire?
- Who your floor fire emergency officer is?
- The location of the nearest fire extinguisher?
- The location of the nearest fire alarm station?
- The location of the nearest two exits?
- Who needs assistance in the event of an emergency

#### If you don't know, find out now!

- Mobility-impaired? Have you informed your floor fire emergency officer?
- Read the posted fire emergency instructions.
- Report all fire hazards.
- When the fire alarm sounds, notify the Fire Department.

### At Home

Statistics reveal that 78 percent of deaths from fire occur in the home, with most of the fatalities taking place between 2 am and 4 am, while occupants are asleep. That is why it is critical to develop an escape plan, because one needs to react quickly since with a fire:

- The smoke is black and very thick, making it impossible to see.
- There is no time for indecision; an entire home can be engulfed within five minutes.
- Most people are killed by smoke inhalation, not the flame of the fire.
- The heat of the fire is extremely intense and can kill you instantly.

## Develop and Practice a Fire Escape Plan

- Install smoke alarms on every level. Keep smoke alarms clean and dust-free, checking them monthly. Replace batteries yearly and alarms every 10 years.
- In order to be able to react quickly to fire, draw a floor plan of your home showing all possible exits from each room.
- Where possible, plan two exits: a main route and an alternate route from each room.
- Since the majority of fire deaths occur while you are sleeping, you should practice your plan at night as well, getting down on your hands and knees with a flashlight while crawling to safety. Heavy smoke impairs breathing, which is why staying close to the floor increases chances of escape.
- Make certain that everyone understands that if they hear the smoke alarm, or someone shouting "FIRE", they should immediately evacuate the home.
- Designate a meeting place outside your home in the event of a fire.
- Small children unable to escape should be taught to open their windows and wave an article of clothing to attract attention. Instruct them to wait at the window until someone comes and to never hide from the fire. Discuss with a fire department official whether an escape ladder would be appropriate to install.
- Sleep with doors closed. If children are frightened, parents can close doors after the children fall asleep and use a room monitor to hear them during the night.
- If awakened by a smoke alarm or a fire, instruct family members to feel the door for heat and check air at the bottom. If you don't smell smoke and the air is cool, kneel and open the door slowly, turning your face away from the opening. If smoke is present or the door is hot, use another exit.
- Purchase an A-B-C fire extinguisher, whose rating is based on the fuel: 'A' originates from a wood or paper fire, 'B' is caused by flammable liquids and 'C' is an electrical fire. Learn how to use this fire extinguisher by remembering the acronym PASS. Pull the pin, Aim the extinguisher, Squeeze or press the handle and Sweep side-to-side at the base of the fire.
- If you live in an apartment building, develop your escape plan taking into account fire escape procedures provided by building management.
- Make sure your babysitter understands your fire escape plan.
- Practice Your Escape Plan: regular practice is essential so that every family member knows what to do and will be able to react quickly.
- If anyone in your home is unable to evacuate without assistance, assign someone to assist them.
- Ensure that everyone in your home knows not to re-enter.
- Call the Fire Department from a neighbour's home.