

Five ways to increase home fire safety

An average of seven Americans die each week as a result of house fires. Most fires occur in residential buildings between the hours of 11 p.m. and 7 a.m., when occupants are most likely to be asleep. Your first line of defense is fire preparedness.

Here's five things you can do to increase your chance of survival in a fire:

- Install smoke alarms on every story of your home and outside sleeping areas. Be sure to test them monthly, clean them every six months and replace batteries in spring and fall. Having working fire alarms can cut your chance of dying in a fire in half!
- Have a fire escape plan for your family and practice it. A small fire can spread rapidly — you may only have minutes or seconds to escape. When going over the details of your escape plan, check windows and doors to ensure all open easily. Know your local emergency number (911). Never stop to gather belongings or reenter a home after safely outside.
- When renovating, consider using fire-rated, noncombustible products. Your choice of insulation, for example, can be vital. Stone wool insulation, like that produced by Roxul, resists temperatures up to approximately 2,150 F. When directly exposed to fire, it will not off-gas, contribute to toxic smoke or promote flames. Fire-resistant building materials can give you extra time to escape when seconds count.
- Purchase a multi-use fire ladder for each bedroom in your home and practice using it. A fire ladder may be your only escape option if flames block critical exits.
- Place fire extinguishers on every level of your home, especially in high-risk areas like the kitchen, near fireplaces and in the garage. Use only for small, contained fires that are not spreading rapidly. Know how to operate your extinguisher before an emergency occurs using the PASS method: Pull pin, Aim low, Squeeze lever and Sweep from side to side. The safest

option is always to evacuate your home and call for help.

Fire prevention measures are a serious matter in every home. Find out how to keep your home and family safe at nfa.org.



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