

Grand Island Fire Department

Why

E.D.I.T.H?

Exit Drills In The Home



FIRE SAFETY
We all take part

Protecting-in-Place

In some cases, smoke or fire may prevent you from exiting your home or apartment building. To prepare for an emergency like this, practice "Protecting in Place" or sealing yourself in for safety as part of your home fire escape plan.

- ◆ Close all doors between you and the fire.
- ◆ Use tape, blankets or towels to seal the door cracks and cover air vents to keep smoke from coming in.
- ◆ If possible, open your windows at the top and bottom so fresh air can get in.
- ◆ If possible, call the fire department, **911**, to report your exact location.
- ◆ Wave a flashlight or light-colored cloth out the window to let fire department personnel know where you are located.

FACTS

- ◆ According to an NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) survey, only **one out of every three** American households have actually developed and practiced a home fire escape plan.
- ◆ While **71%** of Americans have an escape plan in case of fire, only **45%** of those have practiced it.
- ◆ **One-third** of American households estimated that they would have at least 6 minutes before a fire in their home would become life-threatening. The actual time is often much less.
- ◆ Only **8%** said their first thought on hearing a smoke alarm was to get out!

Practice, Practice, Practice

Your fire escape plan may look great on paper, but does it really work? Regular exit drills in the home will allow you to test the plan and make adjustments as needed.

- ◆ Practice your home fire escape plan at least twice a year, making the drill as realistic as possible.
- ◆ Make arrangement's in your plan for anyone in your home who has a disability.
- ◆ Allow children to master fire escape planning and practice before holding a fire drill at night when they are sleeping. The objective is to practice, not to frighten, so telling children there will be a drill before they go to bed can be as effective as a surprise drill.
- ◆ It 's important to determine during the drill whether children and others can readily waken to the sound of the smoke alarm. If they fail to awaken, make sure someone is assigned to wake them up as part of the drill and in a real emergency situation.
- ◆ If your home has two floors, every family member (including children) must be able to escape from the second floor rooms. Escape ladders can be placed in or near windows to provide an escape route. Practice setting up the ladder from a first floor window to make sure you can do it correctly and quickly. Children should only practice with a grownup and only from a first floor window. Store the ladder near the window ready for use.
- ◆ Closing doors on your way out slows the spread of fire, giving you time to escape.

Why E.D.I.T.H.?

Most fatal home fires happen between midnight and 8 AM, when most people are asleep.

Toxic gases and heat - over 1000°F - rise and can travel far ahead of the actual flames.

When your smoke detector sounds, you may have less than 2½ minutes to get out.

Without an escape plan you have practiced, you may not make it.

If you don't have a smoke detector, you may never wake up.

BASIC FIRE ESCAPE PLANNING

- ◆ Gather everyone in your household and make a plan. Walk through your home and inspect all possible exits and escape routes. Households with children should consider drawing a floor plan of your home, marking two ways out of each room, including windows and doors. Also mark the location of each smoke alarm. This is a great way to get children involved in fire safety in a non-threatening way.
- ◆ Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home.
- ◆ Everyone in the household must understand the escape plan. When you walk through your plan, check to make

sure the escape routes are clear of obstacles and doors and windows can be opened easily.

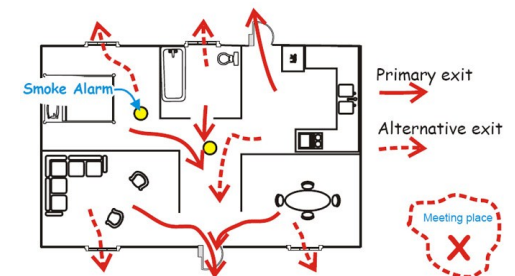
- ◆ Choose an outside meeting place (a neighbor's house, a light post, mailbox, stop sign, etc.) a safe distance in front of your home where everyone can meet after they've escaped. Make sure to mark the location of the meeting place on your escape plan.
- ◆ Go outside to see if your house number is clearly visible from the street. If not, paint it on the curb or install house numbers to ensure that responding emergency personnel can find your home.
- ◆ Have everyone memorize the emergency number of the fire department, **911**. That way any member of the household can call from a neighbor's house or a cell phone once safely outside.
- ◆ If there are infants, older adults, or family members with physical limitations, make sure that someone is assigned to assist them during the fire drill and in the event of an emergency. Assign a backup person too, in case the first person isn't home during the emergency.
- ◆ If windows or doors in your home have security bars, make sure that the bars have an emergency release devices inside so they can be opened immediately in an emergency. Emergency release devices won't compromise your security - but they will increase your chances of safely escaping a house fire.
- ◆ Tell guests or visitors to your home about your family's fire escape plan. When staying overnight at other people's homes, ask about their escape plan. If they don't have one in place, offer to help them make one. This is especially important when children are permitted to attend "sleepovers" at friend's homes.
- ◆ Be fully prepared for a real fire: when a smoke alarm sounds, get out immediately. Residents of high-rise and apartment buildings may be safer "protecting in

place."

- ◆ **Once you're out, stay out!** Under no circumstances should you ever go back into a burning building. If someone is missing, inform the fire department dispatcher when you call. Firefighters have skills and equipment to perform rescues.

SOME TIPS TO REMEMBER

- ◆ Be sure everyone has a second way out.
- ◆ Escape ladders may be necessary.
- ◆ Rearrange bedrooms, if necessary, to provide easier escape for children, elderly or disabled.
- ◆ Never use elevators if there's a fire.



Grand Island Fire Department

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- ◆ Station 1
409 E. Fonner Park Rd. 385-5300
- ◆ Station 2
1720 N. Broadwell Ave. 385-5310
- ◆ Station 3
2310 S. Webb Road 385-5337
- ◆ Station 4
3690 W. State St. 385-5387