

A TIP FROM THE HOUSING CENTER

If Fire Breaks Out In Your Home

Smoke detectors greatly increase the likelihood you'll survive a fire. Place at least one on each floor of your home and outside each sleeping area. Install detectors inside bedrooms for added protection. Mount detectors on the ceiling, at least 4 inches away from the wall. Test detectors monthly and replace batteries once a year. To help you remember, plan to install new batteries on an annual event, such as the Fourth of July. Replace smoke detectors after 10 years.

If a fire does break out, take immediate action. Smoke and flames spread rapidly. Get out of the house right away, and then call the fire department from a neighbor's house or a cellular phone. Fumes overcome most victims long before flames reach them. Use your safest exit. If you must escape through smoke, get down and crawl low under the smoke, keeping your head about 12-24 inches off the floor.

If you haven't gotten around to conducting a family fire drill, now's the time to do it. And visit your local hardware store or home center to invest in a few fire extinguishers. Extinguishers are classified according to the type of fire they will put out, and you'll find the classification displayed on an extinguisher. A Class ABC extinguisher is multi-purpose and works well against any small, self-contained fire. Keep one in the kitchen, extras in the basement or garage. Contact your fire department to ask about training. Don't attempt to fight a fire unless you know you have the right extinguisher to handle that type of fire, and be sure to keep your back to a safe exit.

In Case of Emergency

Take a few minutes to look up these numbers and post them by the kitchen phone.

Fire or Crime in Progress _____ 911

Poison Control Center

Alarm Service

Family Physician

Insurance Agent

Neighbor

Babysitter

The place where you and your loved ones live, with your possessions and irreplaceable mementos of your past, is well worth protecting. The time, money and attention you devote to securing it will reward you with increased peace of mind and the feeling that your home is indeed a safe haven.