



# Home Fire Escape Planning

**To get you and your family out quickly and safely, you need to have planned and practiced your fire escape routes. Doing so could save your life!**

## Smoke alarms

A smoke alarm's early warning of smoke/fire danger can buy you precious time in the event of a fire.

- ◆ Install at least one smoke alarm on each level of your home.
- ◆ Place them between sleeping rooms and other living areas. It's during sleeping hours that most people die in fires.
- ◆ Test smoke alarms monthly to ensure they are in working condition. Replace batteries once a year.

## Your fire safety plan

- ◆ Identify two exits from **each** room, particularly bedrooms. Planning two escape routes could save your life if one exit is blocked by smoke or fire.
- ◆ Involve the whole household in drawing a simple map of your home and marking exactly how to get out in an emergency.
- ◆ Make special plans for very young children, older people or people with disabilities living in your home. Decide who will be responsible for helping them escape in an emergency.
- ◆ Hold a fire drill at least once a year. Think of what you may encounter if a fire occurs and prepare for it:
  - **Pretend there's smoke in the room.** In a real fire, the air closest to the floor will be fresher, cooler and easier to see through. Stay low!
  - **Check the door with your hand.** If the door is hot, fire could already be burning through! That's when you'll use your alternate exit. If the door is cool it may be safe. Brace your shoulder against it, turn your face away and open it a crack to check. If there is any smoke or heat, slam the door shut and head for an alternate exit.
  - **Make sure everyone knows how to open the windows in your home.** In most cases, a window will be your best alternate exit. If you have to smash it to get out—do it. Place a blanket or pillow on the window sill to protect yourself from broken glass. If the bedroom windows are high above the ground, consider getting fire ladders, and practise so everyone knows how to use them.
  - **Close doors behind you.** A closed door can hold back toxic smoke and flames in an emergency and could give you a few life saving seconds to escape .
  - **Don't go back.** Decide on a meeting place outside so everyone can be accounted for. Designate one person to find a phone away from the home, and call the fire department. Do not go back inside the house until the fire department says it is okay to do so.
  - **Never take an elevator.** It could take you directly to the fire! Use the exit stairs instead.

**If you are trapped, protect yourself until help arrives.** Close the doors between you and the smoke and stuff air vents and cracks with blankets, towel or clothing. Then, carefully open a window to signal for help and let in some fresh air.