

# HUMAN BEHAVIOUR DURING FIRES

Researchers who studied the behaviour of humans during fires have revealed some disturbing facts about how individuals react when faced with a fire situation. The study indicated in incidents where smoke was present, 60% of the people attempted to move through it. The more extended the smoke spread the more frequently exits other than normal were used. In many cases poor judgment due to a lack of knowledge caused individuals to attempt to fight the fire as a first option.

The theme of this year's campaign is most appropriate effective fire safety depends on teamwork. That's why the theme for this year's Fire Prevention Week (FPW) is Team Up for Fire Safety™.

## **STUDIES SHOW THREE TYPES OF REACTION TO FIRE WHICH OCCUR IN THE FOLLOWING ORDER:**

- Concern with evacuation of the building either by oneself or with others.
- Concern with fire fighting or at least containing the fire.
- Concern with warning or alerting others, either individuals or the fire department.

## **FEMALES ARE MORE LIKELY TO:**

- Warn others.
- Immediately leave the building.
- Request assistance.
- Evacuate their family.

## **MALES ARE MORE LIKELY TO:**

- Stay and fight the fire.
- Minimize the risk.
- Leave the building and evacuate others.
- Call for assistance.

The most frequent courses of action appeared to be directed solely to one of two areas, either leaving the building or fighting the fire. The more serious the person considered the fire to be, the more likely that they would immediately leave the building. If they judged the fire to be controllable they would stay and fight.

## **REMEMBER THAT IN THIS STUDY, EVERY FIRE THAT OCCURRED REQUIRED THE FIRE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE.**

One of the most interesting and encouraging points was the more frequently people received training or instruction on what to do in a fire, the more likely they were to raise the alarm or organize evacuation as a first action.

## **IN CONCLUSION**

The study points to the fact that knowledge is a life saver. The more an individual is aware of the danger and their limitations in a fire situation, the more likely they are to leave the building and call for help.