



Putting Your Plan To The Test

- Practice your home fire escape plan twice a year, making the drill as realistic as possible.
- 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 that 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 additional escape route. Review the manufacturer's instructions carefully so you'll be able to use a safety ladder in an emergency. 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 grown-up, and only from a first-story window. Store the ladder near the window, in an easily accessible location. You don't want to have to search for it during a fire.
- Always choose the escape route that is safest – the one with the least amount of smoke and heat – but be prepared to escape through toxic smoke if necessary. When you do your fire drill, everyone in the family should practice crawling low on their hands and knees, one to two feet above the ground. By keeping your head low, you'll be able to breathe the "good" air that's closer to the floor.
- It's important to practice crawling on your hands and knees, not your bellies, as some poisons produced by smoke are heavier than air and settle to the floor.
- Closing doors on your way out slows the spread of fire, giving you more time to safely escape.
- In some cases, smoke or fire may prevent you from exiting your home or apartment building. To prepare for an emergency like this, practice "sealing yourself in for safety" as part of your home fire escape plan. Close all doors between you and the fire. Use duct tape 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.

For more information you can contact The City of Newton Fire Department at 828-695-4334.

