

MONTHLY PREPAREDNESS TOPIC

FIRE

Nationally since 2000, 85 fatal fires, claiming 118 lives, have occurred on college campuses, in Greek housing, or in off-campus housing within three miles of the campus. Each year more than 2,500 people die and 12,600 are injured in home fires in the United States, with direct property loss due to home fires estimated at \$7.3 billion annually. By preparing in advance, you can know how you will respond if a fire strikes.

About Fires

Fire is **FAST!** In less than 30 seconds a small flame can turn into a major fire. It only takes minutes for thick black smoke to fill a house or for it to be engulfed in flames.

Fire is **HOT!** Heat is more threatening than flames. Room temperatures in a fire can be 100 degrees at floor level and rise to 600 degrees at eye level. Inhaling these super heated gases will scorch your lungs and melt clothes to your skin.

Fire is **DARK!** Fire starts bright, but quickly produces black smoke and complete darkness.

Fire is **DEADLY!** Smoke and toxic gases kill more people than flames do. Fire produces poisonous gases that make you disoriented and drowsy.

Before a Fire

- Create and practice a fire escape plan
 - Every second counts, so you and your family must always be prepared. Escape plans help you get out of your home quickly.
- Check smoke alarms
 - A working smoke alarm significantly increases your chances of surviving a deadly home fire.
- Make digital copies of valuable documents and records like birth certificates.
- Contact your local fire department for information on training on the proper use and maintenance of fire extinguishers.



Prevent Fires

- Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- Frayed wires can cause fires. Replace all worn, old or damaged appliance cords immediately and do not run cords under rugs or furniture.
- Keep combustible objects at least three feet away from portable heating devices.
- Inspect and clean woodstove pipes and chimneys annually and check monthly for damage or obstructions.
- Store matches and lighters out of children's reach and sight, preferably in a locked cabinet.



If You Discover a Fire

SOUND the alarm – Activate the nearest fire alarm pull station.

EVACUATE the building immediately.

CALL 911 from a safe location and report the details of the fire.

EXTINGUISH the fire if the flames are small and contained, and you have received training on the use of portable extinguishers. If not, close the door to contain the fire.

REPORT to designated meeting area.



For more information please visit,
Ready.gov U.S. Fire Administration (usfa.fema.gov)



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