Protect your family

Make a plan to get them out alive.
That’s all it takes.

Your guide to preparing and practising a family escape plan.

www.fire.tas.gov.au
1800 000 699
Who to Involve

• Everyone, including your children living at home, should have a part in planning and practising an escape plan.

The Plan

• Draw a plan of your house on the attached grid, showing all exits, including windows.
• On the plan show two ways out of every room.
• Pick a safe meeting place in front of your house where the family will meet, such as the letterbox or a neighbour’s house, and mark this on the plan.
• Detach the plan from this booklet, along the perforated edge, and place it on the fridge and ensure everyone knows what to do.

Preparation

• Deadlocked doors can block your escape route.
• When at home, leave keys in any deadlocks or on a hook (perhaps attached to a chain) near the door.
• If you live in a house with more than one level, store strong rope ladders for the upstairs rooms to provide an alternative escape route.
• Otherwise, plan a safe escape route across verandahs, balconies and roofs with an alternate route to ground level.
• Check that windows, security grills and screens open quickly and easily from the inside by any member of your family.
• Family members should practise opening their windows to become familiar with their operation. Jammed windows should be identified and repaired.
• When going to bed each night, shut all doors to the living room, kitchen and laundry, where fires are most likely to start.

Practise your Escape Plan

• Practise your fire escape plan twice a year with the whole family, in the dark and on your hands and knees.
• Lead children to safety, and any other family members who may need help.
• Reassure children that the safest place for them is outside and that pets can save themselves.
• Count all family members at your meeting place. If someone is missing, tell the fire fighters where that person may be. NEVER go back inside.

Escaping from Fire

If a fire breaks out in your home remember the following tips:

• Check the door with the back of your hand – if you feel heat, use your second exit.
• Lead children to safety, and any other family members who may need help.
• If there is smoke, crawl on your hands and knees to the nearest exit.
• Call the fire service 000.
Preparing and practising an escape plan will increase the chances of getting you and your family out alive if a fire breaks out in your home.

If anything should change around your home, ensure it is included on the plan.

*Remember, the first step to escaping a fire is to plan ahead.*

Remember to check your smoke alarm batteries regularly. Make a habit of changing your smoke alarm battery at the end of daylight saving in March every year.

*Ring 000 in the event of a fire.*
Good Habits for Heating

- Always keep clothes, newspapers, kindling and other flammable materials at least two metres from the heater or two giant steps away from it.

Open Fires and Woodheaters

- Place a metal mesh fireguard in front of open fires and keep the door to woodheaters closed to protect against flying sparks and embers.
- Unless it has a good guard, extinguish the fire completely before leaving the house or retiring for the night.
- Fireguards will also help protect children from burns.

Chimneys and Flues

- Clean your chimney or flue and check it at least once per year.
- Insulate the flue from roofing timbers and wall panelling.

Portable Heaters

- If buying a portable heater, buy one that will switch off when knocked over.
- Keep portable heaters away from areas of heavy traffic.
- Always turn off your portable heater when going to bed or leaving the house.

Burning Candles and Oils

- Open flames in the home can be very dangerous and have started house fires.
- Burning candles, incense or oils close to curtains, papers, bedding and other flammable materials can start a house fire.
- Snuff out open flames, such as candles, when leaving a room or going to bed.

Safety in the Kitchen

Watch the Pot

- Over-heated cooking oil or fat will catch fire and burn vigorously.
- Never leave cooking unattended – Turn it off before you turn away!

Keep the Cooking Area Clean and Clear

- Curtains, tea towels, oven mitts and any other flammable items must be kept well away from the cooking area.
- Wipe up any spilt oil or fat.

No Water

- Water does not put out fat and oil fires.
- Adding water to burning oil or fat will cause the fire to suddenly increase in size and strength.

Smothering the Flame

If a fire does start on the stove:

- Turn off the heat source either on the stove or at the fuse box.
- Smother the fire with a large pan, lid or fire blanket.
- Very carefully slide the pot off the hot plate.
- Do not remove the lid or fire blanket until the pot has cooled, because the fire will re-ignite if the oil is still hot.
- Serious burn injuries may occur if you attempt to carry the burning pot. Leave it where it is if you cannot follow the steps above and call '000' for help.

A smoke alarm will alert you to a fire even if you are asleep, and give you valuable time to escape.

Alarm Locations

- Every home should have at least one working smoke alarm installed between the living and sleeping areas.
- If you can afford more than one smoke alarm then also install one in each bedroom.
- Check that your smoke alarms are approved by Australian Standards.
- The best scenario is interconnected hard wired (240V) smoke alarms in parents and children’s bedrooms.
- Sleeping children are unlikely to wake to an alarm unless it’s in their room and they have been taught what the sound of the alarm means.
- Install alarms in accordance with manufacturers’ guidelines.

Maintaining Alarms

- Test alarms regularly.
- Change the battery at least once a year - Make a habit of changing the battery at the end of daylight saving in March.
- Clean alarms regularly with the fine nozzle on your vacuum cleaner.

That’s all it takes.

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