

Many injuries happen in predictable, preventable ways.

Properly installed and maintained smoke alarms greatly increase the chances your family will survive a house fire!

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Hot Facts about House Fires

- Approximately 70 Oklahomans die each year in house fires.
- In only 3 1/2 minutes, the heat from a house fire can reach over 1100 degrees Fahrenheit. The temperature can reach over 300 degrees in rooms that are not even on fire; this is hot enough to melt plastic and kill the people in those rooms.
- Fire produces gases and fumes that can make you sleepy, weak, and confused. You can't smell these fumes, so if you are asleep the smell won't wake you — *but a smoke alarm will.*
- One out of three people who die in house fires were asleep when the fire began.
- Unlike fires in the movies, the smoke from a house fire can be so thick that your house would be completely dark in 4 minutes, even with all the lights on!
- Heating devices such as heaters, wood stoves, and fireplaces are a leading cause of house fires in Oklahoma. Most often the fires start when furniture, boxes, clothing, etc. are too near the heat source.
- Cigarettes are a leading cause of house fires. Most often the fires start when a cigarette was dropped on to furniture like beds, sofas, or chairs.
- Children playing with fire cause many injuries and house fires every year.
- Two out of five people injured in house fires were trying to fight the fire.

Surviving a House Fire

- Smoke alarms increase the chances of surviving a house fire by 2 to 3 times.
 - Install a smoke alarm just outside the sleeping areas and on every level of the home.
 - Never remove the battery from the smoke alarm.
 - Use smoke alarms with long-life lithium batteries, or replace batteries in regular alarms annually or when the alarm chirps. Replace all smoke alarms after 10 years.
 - Smoke alarms are a cheap and effective way to prevent house fire injuries.
- Some children run and hide when the smoke alarm sounds a house fire warning.
- Making and practicing a house fire escape plan helps everyone get out safe.
 - Always know two ways out of every room (i.e., window and door).
 - Crawl low under smoke to a safe exit.
 - Use the back of the hand to test if a closed door is hot. If it is hot, use another way out.
 - Everyone meet at a previously designated meeting place outside the home.
 - Practice escape plans at least twice a year, both at night and during the day.
 - Call 9-1-1 from a neighbor's home.
 - Never go back inside a burning home to get anything such as clothes or pets.

Internet Resources

- National Fire Protection Administration – www.nfpa.org
- Federal Emergency Management Agency – www.fema.gov/hazard/fire/fire_before.shtml
- U.S. Fire Administration – www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens/index.shtml

Live Injury-Free!