

# SafetyToolboxTalks

## Fire Prevention Week IS IN OCTOBER 9<sup>TH</sup>-15<sup>TH</sup>, 2011 Practice Your Escape Plan!

Fire Prevention Week was established to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire, the tragic 1871 conflagration that killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures and burned more than 2,000 acres. The fire began on October 8, but continued into and did most of its damage on October 9, 1871.

### Facts & figures\*

- Only one-fifth to one-fourth of households (23%) have actually developed and practiced a home fire escape plan to ensure they could escape quickly and safely.
- In 2004, there were an estimated 395,500 reported home structure fires and 3,190 associated civilian deaths in the United States.
- One-third of American households who made an estimate thought they would have at least 6 minutes before a fire in their home would become life-threatening. The time available is often less. And only 8% said their first thought on hearing a smoke alarm would be to get out!

### Your ability to get out depends on advance warning from smoke alarms and advance planning.

- Pull together everyone in your household and make a plan. Walk through your home and inspect all possible exits and escape routes. Households with children should consider drawing a floor plan of your home, marking two ways out of each room, including windows and doors. Also, mark the location of each smoke alarm. For easy planning, download NFPA's escape planning grid (attached). This is a great way to get children involved in fire safety in a non-threatening way.
- Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. NFPA 72, National Fire Alarm Code® requires interconnected smoke alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.
- Everyone in the household must understand the escape plan. When you walk through your plan, check to make sure the escape routes are clear and doors and windows can be opened easily.
- Choose an outside meeting place (i.e. neighbor's house, a light post, mailbox, or stop sign) a safe distance in front of your home where everyone can meet after they've escaped. Make sure to mark the location of the meeting place on your escape plan.
- Go outside to see if your street number is clearly visible from the road. If not, paint it on the curb or install house numbers to ensure that responding emergency personnel can find your home.
- Have everyone memorize the emergency phone number of the fire department. That way any member of the household can call from a neighbor's home or a cellular phone once safely outside.



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- If there are infants, older adults, or family members with mobility limitations, make sure that someone is assigned to assist them in the fire drill and in the event of an emergency. Assign a backup person too, in case the designee is not home during the emergency.

### **Putting your plan to the test**

- Practice your home fire escape plan twice a year, making the drill as realistic as possible.
- 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 under toxic smoke if necessary. When you do your fire drill, everyone in the family should practice getting low and going under the smoke to your exit.
- 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. Call the fire department to report your exact location. Wave a flashlight or light-colored cloth at the window to let the fire department know where you are located.

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## BRIESER CONSTRUCTION SAFETY MEETING

Week of: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Superintendent: \_\_\_\_\_

Site Specific Topics:

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Crew Safety

Recommendations: \_\_\_\_\_

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Reviewed MSDS #: \_\_\_\_\_ Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Attended By: (Print your Name)


Supervisor/Foreman: \_\_\_\_\_