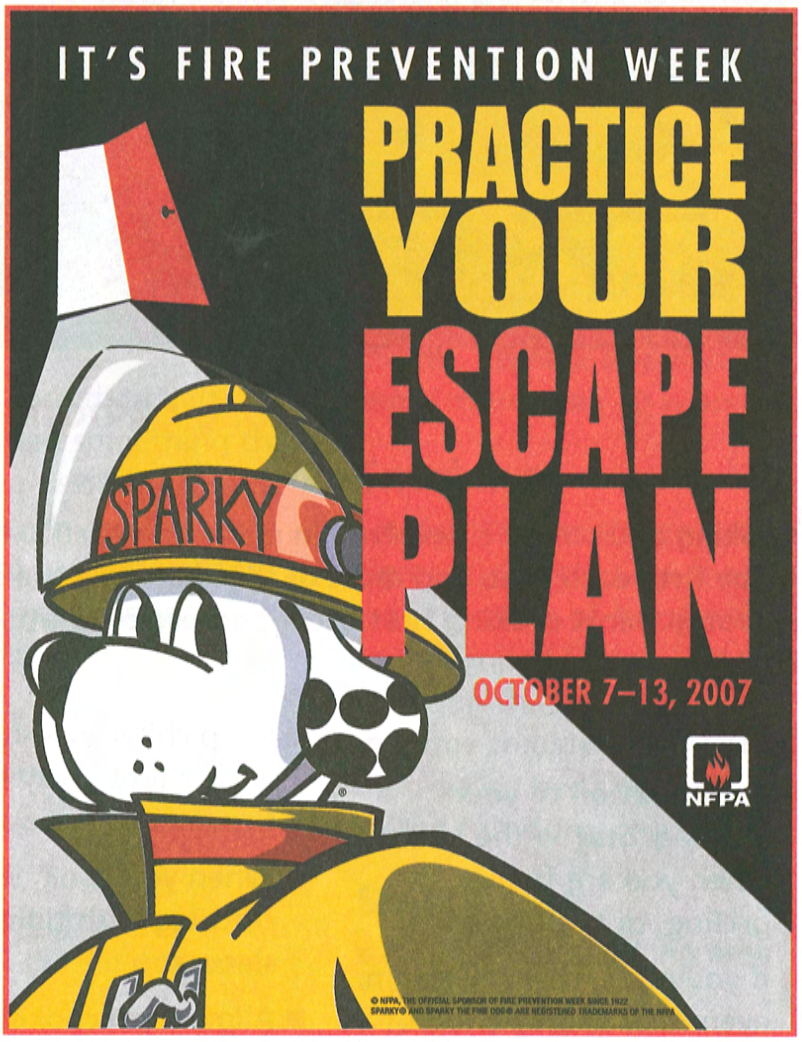
FIRE FACTS

NFPA®

FIRE PREVENTION WEEK • OCTOBER 7–13, 2007

U.S. Fire Facts

- The leading causes of home fires are cooking (which leads to the most fires and the most injuries), smoking (which leads to the most deaths), heating, electrical equipment, and intentionally set fires.
- In 2005, U.S. fire departments responded to 1.6 million fires – 24% were home fires.
- In 2005, home fires killed 3,050 people.
- Home fires killed roughly 8 people every day in 2005.
- In 2005, 13,300 fire injuries from home fires (not including fire fighter injuries) were reported to U.S. fire departments.
- As of 2004 96 percent of all homes (with telephones) have at least one smoke alarm.
- Operating smoke alarms were present in only half of the home fires reported in 2000–2004.
- Sixty–five percent of home-fire deaths occurred in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.



It's Fire Prevention Week–Practice your Escape Plan!

Fire Prevention Week commemorates the **Great Chicago Fire** of **October 8-9, 1871**. The landmark disaster raged for several days and killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 more homeless, and destroyed more than 17,000 buildings.

Each October, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) sponsors a fire prevention campaign. The theme for Fire Prevention Week 2007 focuses on how to plan and practice escape from your home in case of fire.

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Facts about the leading ca

Cooking–the leading cause of home fires and injuries.

Cooking equipment is involved in more than 10,000 reported home fires each year, and most of those involve the kitchen stovetop. Most cooking fires occur because of unattended cooking.

Safety Tips

- Pay attention to your cooking. Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food.
- If you must leave the room, even for a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- When you are simmering, baking, boiling, or roasting food, check it regularly, stay in the home, and use a timer to remind you.
- If you have young children, use the stove's back burners whenever possible.
- Keep children and pets at least 3 feet away from the stove.
- When you cook, wear clothing with tight-fitting sleeves.
- Allow food cooked in a microwave oven to cool for a minute or more before you remove it from the oven and use an oven mitt.
- Open microwaved food slowly. Hot steam escaping from the container can cause painful burns. Let food cool before eating.

Heating

Home heating fires peak during the months of December, January, and February.

Safety Tips

- Keep space heaters at least 3 feet from people and from anything that can burn, such as curtains and bedding.
- Turn space heaters off when you go to bed or leave the room.

Intentional Fires

In 2000–2004, 19,000 home structure fires were intentionally set. These fires caused 310 deaths and $487 million in property loss.

Safety Tips

- Encourage your community to implement an anti-arson program.
- Keep trash from collecting on your property.
- Remove abandoned vehicles from your property.
- Remove dead branches that could be used as a fuel source.

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uses of fires in the home

- Store flammable liquids in a locked shed or detached garage.
- Install lighting around the property to deter intruders.
- If a child displays fire-starting behavior, seek professional help through your fire department or from a mental health professional.
- Do not hesitate to report a neighborhood child who starts fires to his or her parents or to authorities.

Candles

A candle is an open flame. It can easily ignite combustibles nearby. Candles caused 4% of the home fires in 2000–2004, 7% of the associated deaths and 12% of the associated injuries. More than half started when something that could burn was too close to the candle. An earlier study found that candles used for light caused one-third of the fatal candle fires.

Safety Tips

- Extinguish candles when you leave the room or go to bed.
- Use flashlights, not lit candles, during power outages.
- Keep candles at least 1 foot away from things that can burn, like curtains, paper, and bedding.
- Never leave a child unattended in a room with a lit candle.

Smoke alarms save lives!

Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. For the best protection, interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound. Test your smoke alarms at least once a month. Replace any alarm that's more than 10 years old.

Smoking

Smoking materials (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, etc.) are the leading cause of fire deaths in the United States. The most common things first ignited in home smoking fires are mattresses, bedding, upholstered furniture, and trash.

Safety Tips

- Designate a smoking area outside the home.
- Provide smokers with deep, sturdy ashtrays.
- Keep smoking materials away from anything that can burn.
- Choose fire-safe cigarettes.

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The theme for Fire Prevention Week 2007 is home escape planning and practice.

Only 23% of households have actually developed and practiced a home fire escape plan.

Make your home escape plan

Draw a simple floor plan of your home showing all exits, including windows. Sit down with everyone in your home, talk about the two best ways to get out of each room, and mark those exits on your plan. Make sure all exits are clear. If you have security bars, make sure they have quick-release devices on the inside. Decide on a safe meeting place outside the home where everyone will gather after they have escaped a fire. Be sure everyone knows the emergency phone number of the local fire department. Make sure everyone knows the sound of the smoke alarm and when it sounds to get out and stay out.

Now practice it

Send everyone to his or her bedroom and sound the smoke alarm. Go directly to your meeting place and make sure everyone has escaped. Close off some exits and pretend they're blocked by smoke or flame. In a real fire, you should call the fire department from a neighbor's phone or a mobile phone only after you have left the building.

In a real fire, you must move quickly, carefully, and calmly.

Residential sprinklers

Consider installing an automatic sprinkler system in your home. Sprinkler systems are set off by high heat, not cooking fumes, and spray water only on the area immediately below them.

Keeping Time

In the United States, in 2005

- A fire department responded to a fire every 20 seconds.
- An outdoor fire was reported every 39 seconds
- One home fire was reported every 83 seconds.
- A structure fire was reported every 62 seconds.
- One civilian was injured in a fire every 29 minutes.
- One civilian died in a fire every 2 hours and 23 minutes.

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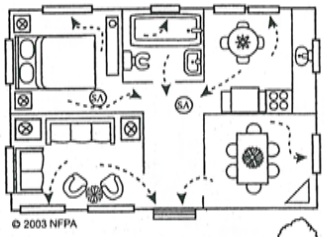
Home Fire Escape Plan

Memorize your **fire department's emergency phone number** and write it here: _____

Use the space below to create your home fire escape plan.



- Draw a floor plan or a map of your home. Show all doors and windows.
- Mark two ways out of each room.
- Mark all of the smoke alarms with (SA). Smoke alarms should be in each sleeping room, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of the home.
- Pick a family meeting place outside where everyone can meet.
- Remember, practice your plan at least twice a year!

Check out **www.sparky.org** for fire safety games and activities.

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Grown-ups: Children don't always awake when the smoke alarm sounds. Know what your child will do before a fire occurs. Get more information on smoke alarms and escape planning at **www.nfpa.org/factsheets.**