



Ships Point Volunteer Fire Department

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A FIRE ESCAPE PLAN CAN SAVE YOUR FAMILY!

Statistics reveal that 78 percent of deaths from fire occur in the home, with most of the fatalities taking place between 2 am and 4 am, while occupants are asleep. That is why it is critical to develop a family escape plan, because one needs to react quickly since with a fire:

- The smoke can be black and very thick, making it impossible to see.
- There is no time for indecision; an entire home can be engulfed within five minutes.
- Most people are killed by smoke inhalation, not the flame of the fire.
- The heat of the fire is extremely intense and can kill you instantly.

Develop and Practice a Fire Escape Plan

- **Install smoke alarms on every level.** Keep smoke alarms clean and dust-free and checking them monthly. **Replace batteries twice yearly**, spring and fall, when you turn your clock back or forward. If you need a smoke alarm or a battery, call the Ships Point Volunteer Fire Department at 250-335-0551.
- In order to be able to react quickly to fire, draw a floor plan of your home showing all possible exits from each room.
- Where possible, plan two exits: a main route and an alternate route from each room.
- Since the majority of fire deaths occur while people are sleeping, you should practice your plan at night. Get everyone down on their hands and knees with a flashlight while crawling to safety. **Heavy smoke impairs breathing, which is why staying close to the floor increases chances of escape.**
- Make certain that everyone understands that if they hear the smoke alarm, or if someone is shouting "FIRE", they should immediately, safely evacuate the home.
- **Designate a meeting place outside your home in the event of a fire.**
- Small children unable to escape should be taught to open their windows and wave an article of clothing to attract attention. Instruct them to wait at the window until someone comes and to never hide from the fire.
- If at all possible, sleep with bedroom doors closed this may slow the rate of growth of a house fire.
- If awakened by a smoke alarm or a fire, instruct family members to feel the door and door knob for heat. If you don't smell smoke and the door feels cool, kneel and open the door slowly, turning your face away from the opening. If smoke is present or the door is hot, use another pre-planned alternate exit from the room.
- If it applies, make sure your babysitter understands your fire escape plan.
- **Practice Your Escape Plan:** regular practice is essential so that every family member knows what to do and will be able to react quickly.
- If anyone in your home is unable to evacuate without assistance, assign someone to assist them.
- Ensure that everyone in your home knows **not to re-enter the building for any reason.**
- **Call 911 from a cell phone or a neighbour's home.**

[More information on escape planning](#)