



High-Rise Fire Safety Tips

It is important to know the fire safety features of your building and work with your neighbors to keep your building as fire-safe as possible.

- For the best protection, select a fully sprinklered building. If your building is not sprinklered, ask the landlord or management to consider installing a sprinkler system.
- Meet with your landlord or building manager to learn about the fire safety features of your building (fire alarms, sprinklers, voice communication procedures, evacuation plans, and how to respond to an alarm). Insist that all fire safety systems be kept in working order.
- Know the locations of all available exit stairs from your floor in case the nearest one is blocked by fire or smoke.
- If you use a wheelchair or walker or are unable to make it down the stairs in case of an emergency, talk with your landlord or building manager about purchasing an evacuation chair.
- Make sure all exit and stairwell doors are clearly marked, are not locked or blocked by security bars, and are clear of clutter.
- Learn the location of your building's fire alarms and how to use them.
- If there is a fire, pull the fire alarm on your way out of the building to notify the fire department and your neighbors.
- Leave the building by the fastest route but do not use elevators.
- Close all doors behind you and be sure to take your key.
- If there is smoke or fire on your way out, use your second way out. If you must escape through smoke, get low and go under the smoke to your way out.
- Some evacuation plans require you to go to a "safe area" ("shelter in place") inside the high-rise and wait for instructions from the fire department.
- Listen for instructions from fire fighters or public address system—you may be told to stay where you are. Follow instructions.
- Go to your outside meeting place and stay there. Call the fire department. If someone is trapped in the building, notify the fire department.
- If you can't get out of your apartment because of fire, smoke, or a disability, **STUFF** wet towels or sheets around the door and vents to keep smoke out. **CALL** the fire department and tell them where you are. **OPEN** a window slightly and wave a bright cloth to signal your location. Be prepared to close the window if it makes the smoke condition worse. Fire department evacuation of a high-rise building can take a long time. Communicate with the fire department to monitor evacuation status.





Home Escape Planning Safety Tips

If a fire breaks out in your home, you have only a few minutes to get out safely once the smoke alarm sounds. Everyone needs to know how to get outside if there is a fire.

- Draw a floor plan of your home. Visit each room and, if possible, find two ways out. Mark the ways out on the escape plan.
- All windows and doors should open easily and should not be blocked by furniture or clutter. Make sure the escape routes are clear. You should be able to use them to get outside.
- Make sure your home has smoke alarms. Push the test button to make sure each alarm is working. If you cannot safely reach the smoke alarm, ask for help. Everyone in your home should be able to recognize the sound of the smoke alarm.
- Choose an outside meeting place. It should be in front of and away from your home and should be something permanent, such as a tree or a neighbor's house. Everyone should agree to meet at the meeting place after they escape.
- Make sure everyone in your home knows the fire department's emergency number.
- Assign someone to help any household members who may have difficulty getting out alone.



- Everyone in the home should practice the escape drill together at least twice a year. Close doors behind you as you leave.
- Tell house guests about your fire escape plan.
- Prepare for a real fire. When a smoke alarm sounds, get outside immediately.
- Once you're outside, stay outside. Leave the firefighting to the professionals.
- Remember, get out first and then call for help. Never go back inside until the fire department gives the OK. Things can be replaced—YOU cannot.
- If smoke or fire blocks one of your ways out, use another way out. If you must go through smoke, get low and go under the smoke to escape.





Fire Safety Tips for People with Disabilities

Most fire deaths happen in the home. Everyone should have a fire escape plan and practice how to get outside.

- Home fire sprinklers can contain and may even put out a fire in less time than it would take the fire department to arrive. When choosing an apartment or remodeling or purchasing a home, look for a residence that has home fire sprinklers.
- Include everyone in planning and practicing home fire drills. People with disabilities can provide input on the best methods for them to escape.
- People with disabilities should discuss what assistance they may need with everyone in the home (and with neighbors).
- In an apartment building, know the location of all exit stairs and arrange for assistance in case of an emergency.
- Choose an outside meeting place for everyone to meet after escaping.
- Keep a telephone or phone with TDD (telecommunication device for the deaf) in the sleeping room within reach of the bed.
- Install smoke alarms inside every bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of your home. For the best protection, interconnect all the smoke alarms so that when one sounds, they all sound.
- Smoke alarms and alert devices, called accessories, are available for people who are deaf. Strobe lights throughout the home are activated by smoke alarms and alert people who are deaf to fire conditions. When people who are deaf are asleep, a high-intensity strobe light along with a pillow shaker or a bed shaker can wake them up and alert them to fire conditions.
- Smoke alarm alert devices, called accessories, are available for people who are hard of hearing. These accessories produce a loud, mixed low-pitched sound. This equipment is activated by the sound of the smoke alarm and is usually installed next to the bed. People who are hard of hearing may find that a pillow shaker or a bed shaker is also helpful to wake them.
- Test smoke alarms at least once a month using the test button. If you are unable to safely reach the alarm, ask for help. Some alarms have features that make them easier to test, such as with a flashlight or the television remote.
- Practice your home fire escape drill twice a year.





Medical Oxygen Safety Tips

Use of portable medical oxygen in the home has grown over the past decade. Medical oxygen adds a higher percentage of oxygen to the air a patient breathes. Fire needs oxygen to burn. If a fire should start in an oxygen-enriched area, the material burning will burn more quickly.

- There is no safe way to smoke in the home when oxygen is in use. No one should smoke in a home where a patient is using oxygen.
- Candles, matches, woodstoves, and even sparking toys can be ignition sources and should not be used in a home where medical oxygen is in use.
- Keep oxygen cylinders at least 5 feet (1.5 meters) from a heat source, open flames, or electrical devices.
- Body oil, hand lotion, and items containing oil and grease can easily ignite. Keep oil and grease away where oxygen is in use.
- Never use aerosol sprays containing combustible materials near oxygen.
- Post “No Smoking” and “No Open Flames” signs in and outside the home to remind people not to smoke.

