

For further information on Fire Safety in the home, please visit the Pasadena Fire Department home page at www.cityofpasadena.net/fire/. We hope our website provides you with all the information you need about our Department. If you need more information or wish to make a comment, please e-mail us at www.firechief@cityofpasadena.net.



General information about the Pasadena Fire Department can be obtained by contacting:

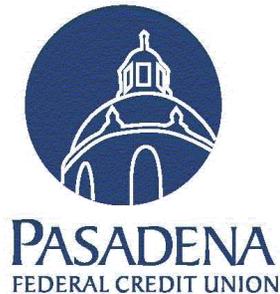
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This handbook was developed for the community by the Pasadena Fire Department and printed by Pasadena Federal Credit Union.



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Monday – Friday 07:30 to 5: 30 p.m.; Phone: (626) 744-4655 or (626) 744-4668; Fax: (626) 585-9164

COMMUNITY-BASED FIRE SAFETY PROGRAM



“Fire Safety in the Home”



Dennis J. Downs
Fire Chief
Pasadena Fire Department

Letter to Community from Fire Chief

- If a fire or earthquake strikes your home, will you know how to get out safely?
- Once outside, do you and your family members know where to meet so that you will know when everyone is accounted for?
- Do you know what to do if you are trapped in a room or apartment that is on fire?
- Did you know there are security bars for your home's windows that keep the bad guys out, but let you escape during an emergency?
- There are several types of fire extinguishers; do you know which type is recommended for your home?

These are just a few of the questions that this booklet is designed to answer.

As you read through the following material, ask yourself "how could this apply to me and my family?" Every year, firefighters nation-wide are aware of injuries and deaths that could have likely been avoided if those involved had known and practiced some simple safety tips—the same type of safety tips contained in this booklet.

On behalf of the men and women of the Pasadena Fire Department, we hope that you find the safety information contained in this booklet useful in keeping you and your family members safe.

Sincerely,



Dennis J. Downs,
Fire Chief

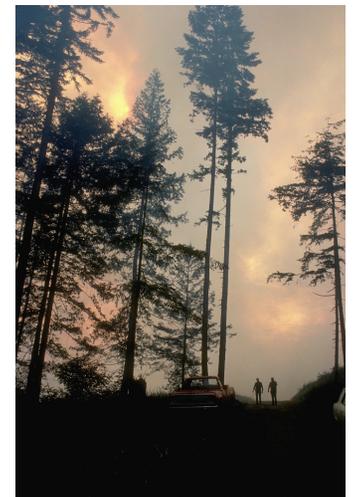
Wildfire Protection

The Pasadena Fire Department does not recommend indiscriminate clearing of native chaparral due to the important role that it plays in slope stabilization and erosion control.

- 0 to 30 feet from your house, very low and green around the house.
 - a. MOW grasses & weeds; Trim shrubs & trees up 6 feet from the ground and REMOVE dead branches and trees.
 - b. RE-LANDSCAPE with ground covers under 24 inches tall with high moisture content.
 - c. RETAIN specimen shrubs and trees 18 feet apart from each other.
- 30 to 60 feet from your house, greenbelt zone. Along with (a) and (b) From zone 1, include plants with high moisture content such as Citrus, Oak, and Oleander at least 18 feet apart.
- 60 to 100 feet from your house, low fuel planting. Thin native vegetation into groupings at least 18 feet apart from one another. Steep slopes may need distances up to 200 feet.

When should you start? NOW! A serious brush fire can occur anytime, but the greatest hazard exists from May – November.

Contact the Pasadena Fire Department if you need additional information at (626) 744-4668.



Wildfires...

Are You Prepared?

Wildfires often begin unnoticed. They spread quickly, igniting brush, trees and homes. Reduce your risk by preparing now before a wildfire strikes. Meet with your family to decide what to do and where to go if wildfires threaten your area. Follow the steps listed to protect your family, home and property.

Practice Wildfire Safety

People start most wildfires...find out how you can promote and practice wildfire safety.

- Contact your fire department for information on fire laws. Make sure that fire vehicles can get to your home.
- Post house numbers so they are readable from street.
- Clean leaves, needles and twigs from roof gutters and eaves.
- Prune trees properly, trees that have been topped or heavily pruned can become fire hazards. For information about proper pruning and tree care techniques, call the Pasadena Beautiful Foundation at (626) 795-9704.
- Mulch flat planting areas 3 inches deep to suppress weeds.
- Install a roof that meets the fire resistance classification of Class "A".
- Cover chimney outlet with a nonflammable screen of 1/2 inch.
- Stack woodpiles at least 30 feet from all structures, fences and other combustible materials.
- Enclose the undersides of elevated decks with fire resistive materials.
- Clear all vegetation and other flammable materials from beneath deck areas.
- Refrain from dumping lawn and brush clippings into canyons.

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Family Fire Safety Plan

The Plan

A set of procedures for your home is a good thing to have when dealing with an emergency. As a family, discuss various emergencies and develop plans for how the family members are to deal with them. Survival rates increase in homes with emergency plans. A home evacuation plan should contain at least the following:

- Procedures for actions taken during an emergency.
- An evacuation plan showing alternate escape routes.
- An assembly location.

1. Draw a floor plan of your home. Include the Following:

- a. A primary and secondary exit route from each room. The primary route should go directly to the outside such as through the window.
- b. Mark the area where everyone is to meet once they are outside of the house.
- c. Mark the location of utility shut-off switches and valves.

2. Physically check the exit routes.

Be sure that anyone, who will need to use them, can use them. This will clarify the need for things like escape ladders, ramps, and security grill release mechanisms for protected doors and windows, and the availability of keys for double key locks.

3. Go over the plan with the entire family.

- a. Make sure that everyone understands they are not to go back into the house or apartment once they are out. Go to the meeting area and wait.
- b. Discuss what to do in the event they become trapped.
- c. Be sure that everyone knows what the smoke detector sounds like.

Home Safety Checklist (cont'd)

Install Fire Extinguishers

Install a fire extinguisher in or near your kitchen and know how to use it. Should you need to purchase one, the IAFC recommends a multi-or all purpose fire extinguisher that is listed by an accredited testing laboratory such as Underwriters Laboratory.

Plan and Practice Your Escape

Create at least two different escape routes and practice them with the entire family. Children are at double the risk of dying in a home fire because they often become scared and confused during fires. Make sure your children understand that a smoke detector signals a home fire and that they recognize its alarm.

Change Your Clock, Change your Battery

Energizer brand batteries, the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and the Pasadena Fire Department urge you to adopt a simple, potentially lifesaving habit: change the batteries in your smoke detector when you change your clocks back to standard time in the fall.

Consider The Following:

- Each day, an average of three kids dies in home fires-1,100 children each year. About 3,600 children are injured in house fires each year. 90 percent of child fire deaths occur in homes without working smoke detectors.
- Although smoke detectors are in 92 percent of American homes, nearly one-third don't work because of old or missing batteries.
- A working smoke detector reduces the risk of dying in a home fire by nearly half.

Home Safety Checklist

These Are Simple Changes That Could Save your Life

☑ **Change Your Smoke Detector Batteries**

The International Associations of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and your local fire department encourage people to change smoke detector batteries at least annually. An easy way to remember to change your batteries is when you turn your clock back in the fall. Replace old batteries, to keep your smoke detector going year-long.

☑ **Check Your Smoke Detectors**

After inserting a fresh battery in your smoke detector, check to make sure the smoke detector itself is working by pushing the safety test button.

☑ **Count Your Smoke Detectors**

Install at least one smoke detector on every level of your home, including the basement and family room and, most importantly, outside all bedrooms.

☑ **Vacuum Your Smoke Detectors**

Each month, clean your smoke detectors of dust and cobwebs to ensure their sensitivity.

☑ **Change Your Flashlight Batteries**

To make sure your emergency flashlights work when you need them, use high quality alkaline batteries. Note: Keep a working flashlight near your bed, in the kitchen, basement and family room, and use it to signal for help in the event of a fire.

Family Fire Safety Plan

The Plan (cont'd)

The first thing to consider when formulating a plan is to have some method of being made aware of the danger. Smoke detectors are simple, automatic devices to provide notification. You may also consider providing each bedroom with a whistle of some sort as a manual method of notifying the family to get out.

Sleeping with the doors closed provides barriers between those you love and nighttime fire in your home. The average household door will last approximately three to five minutes with a fully involved room. Close doors have saved many lives by giving people time to escape. Sometimes, people with small children or infants think that leaving the door open at night will enable them to hear in case their children cry or call out. In a fire, the open door may allow toxic gases to enter the rooms and render both the parents and the children unconscious before any of them are aware of the problem. Inexpensive devices not only allow monitoring of the rooms, but in some cases, allows communication between rooms.

At the sound of the alarm or if you suspect that there is a fire in your home, get out!



If you reach a closed door, feel it before opening. If it is hot, don't open it. Try to use a direct exit to the outside. If the door is cool to the touch, open it cautiously, keeping the door between you and the opening. Stay low and be prepared to close it quickly if heat or smoke is present. In the event that you must move through smoke, stay low on hands and knees crawling quickly to the nearest exit. If you must break a window because it won't open, you can use a heavy object. Use it to punch out all of the glass starting from the top. Scrape the bottom edge of the window to remove fragments that may be sticking up and could injure you. Placing a blanket, pillow or article of clothing on the windowsill before you climb out provides additional protection.

Family Fire Safety Plan

The Plan (cont'd)

Evacuation from a two-story home or second floor apartment can be a little more difficult. Consider the purchase of an escape ladder which is designed to attach quickly to the windowsill. (Available for three-story buildings.) It is important that every member of the family practice with the ladder.



If you are in a two-story building and you must go out the window without a ladder, lower yourself out of the window feet first, facing the building. Hang down from the windowsill at arm's length, let go and drop to the ground. In this position in your average residence, an adult's feet are within six or seven feet of the ground.

Addresses

In the City of Pasadena, buildings are required to have an address that is large enough to be seen from the street. This is because emergency assistance will be delayed if there is no number on the house, the number is hidden, or the number is too small to read. You want the firefighters and paramedics to find you and find you quickly. It is always a good idea to send someone outside to meet the fire department to guide them to the emergency. This is especially true if you live in a large apartment complex with only one address for many units.

Fire Safety Equipment

Smoke Detectors (cont'd)

If you have battery operated smoke detectors, you must maintain them and make sure that the batteries are replaced regularly. Do not remove the batteries because of nuisance alarms such as steam from showers, etc. These problems should be dealt with in another manner such as moving the detector or simply closing the doors. Studies have shown that in residential fires causing death, 60% of those residences did not have smoke detectors, had disconnected the smoke detectors, or had dead or missing batteries. Consider changing the batteries every 6 months. This would also be a good time to vacuum the detector and remove as much dust as possible. This will help to ensure that it will work properly when you need it. If you have hardwired detectors, consider purchasing a couple of battery type detectors and mounting them in strategic places as a back-up system.

Some special considerations for the elderly or the handicapped may need to be addressed in your home. In general, households with elderly or handicapped occupants need a higher level of protection in order to provide additional escape time. As an example, you may need a supervised alarm system where the alarm is monitored by an alarm company that would call the fire department, or in case of someone with a hearing loss, detectors that activate lights, bed shakers, or fans.

For more information on the following programs, call 626.744.7276

Emergency Management

This office provides classes on preparing for disasters such as natural and manmade disasters. You can contact this office to arrange for a speaker to talk to your group/business about different disasters and how to prepare for them. You can also ask to talk with the Emergency Management Coordinator.

Pasadena Emergency Response Team

Training for citizens who are interested in Pasadena Emergency Response Team (PERT). PERT is made up of citizens who have received training on how to handle emergencies in their neighborhoods during large scale emergencies or disasters. Classes are scheduled to meet your specific needs.

Fire Safety Equipment

If You Are Trapped In a Room or Apartment

There may be a situation where there is no way to get out. It may be necessary to sit tight and wait for the fire department to put the fire out. Close as many doors as possible between you and the fire. Stuff the cracks of the door and any vents that are allowing smoke into the room. If available, add additional material such as a mattress or a table over the door and prop them in place with other pieces of furniture. Make your location known. If there is a phone available and it works, call for help. If there is no phone or it doesn't work, yell and hang a sheet out a window to get someone's attention. If you need to open a window, do so, but avoid breaking the window if possible. The need may arise to close the window if smoke from the outside is coming in.

Smoke Detectors

Tests have shown that smoke detectors of either the ionization or photoelectric type should provide adequate warning to the occupants for most residential fires. Ionization detectors respond slightly faster to open, flaming fires than the photoelectric type. But the photoelectric detectors respond faster to smoldering fires with little or no visible flame.



Detectors should be located on the ceiling at least four inches from the wall, or on the wall four to twelve inches from ceiling to the top of the detector. In the City of Pasadena, detectors are required in all apartments and the areas giving access to them.

Smoke detectors in your home can be the battery operated type or wired into your house electrical system, otherwise known as "hardwired." There are also dual-function detectors that are hardwire but have a back-up battery in case of power failure. Choosing between photoelectric or ionization type is up to you, as both types meet the accepted safety standards.

Family Fire Safety Plan

Security Bars

Where security devices are used on windows and doors, it is important to remember that whatever keeps others from entering your home, can keep you and those you love from getting out. Make sure that everyone in the family knows how to use any release devices in the event of an emergency. Bars on windows should have quick release devices if they are installed on windows in a room where someone sleeps. Test these devices at least twice a year to make sure they are working properly. Doors that require a key to open them from either side when they are locked should have the keys left in them on the interior side at night. Someone getting to that door without a key, or dropping a key in the smoke may never get out!



Regardless of how you got out of the building, go to the predetermined meeting place. Remember, if there is a fire in your home, get out and stay out. Practice your plan and take it seriously.

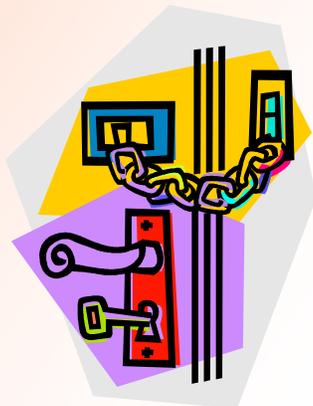
Unsafe vs. Approved Security Bars

WHAT ARE “UNSAFE” SECURITY BARS?

- A) Ones that cannot be opened at all
- B) Cannot be opened quickly
- C) Require:
 - (1) A key
 - (2) Special Knowledge
 - (3) A Separate Tool
 - (4) Extra Physical Effort to Open

“APPROVED” SECURITY BARS ARE ONES THAT:

- A) Can Be Easily Opened From the Inside.
- B) Have Approved Quick-Release Mechanisms.



Fire Safety

Upon Discovery of a Fire

GET OUT! Fire Safety in the home means, with few exceptions, complete evacuation of the home. Close the doors. Do not fight the fire unless it is to save a life. By closing the door, you confine the fire and slow its spread. With the door closed, the fire may be confined to a single room. If possible, close the doors to other rooms on your way out to give added protection.

Notify! Once you are outside, call the fire department. Dial 9-1-1 from a neighbor's phone and be prepared to provide the address, nearest cross street, and a call back phone number. (The phone you are calling from.) Don't hang up before the dispatcher tells you they have all your information. Be prepared to tell the person on the other end of the phone line "who you are, where you are, and what the problem is." If you are in an apartment house with an alarm system, pull the alarm in order to alert the other tenants. You can dial 9-1-1 from a pay phone without putting any money in the phone. Public payphones may not have a call back number.

Report All Fires and Smoke

Many times people are hesitant to call the fire department for small fires. There are a number of reasons for this. Some people feel capable of handling the situation themselves. Others are embarrassed that they had a fire and don't want anyone to know. Some fear being charged for the service that the fire department provides. Consider the risks. Three reasons for making the call are:

- ✓ You are required by law to report fires.
- ✓ It is often necessary to have a fire report on hand from the fire department before an insurance company will pay compensation.
- ✓ Fires should be reported even when you think they have been out so that they may be inspected by the fire department to ensure that they have been completely extinguished.

Fire Safety

Fires

Fires can occur day or night. In the daytime, they may appear to be deceptively small and easily controllable. At night, fire becomes a swift terror, worse than any nightmare.

Fires remain small and grow slowly for only a short time. After that, a fire becomes a rolling inferno moving through your home in moments. During the first five minutes, a small fire can preheat the ceiling materials of a room to over 1000 degrees. At this temperature, materials commonly found in a home begin to break down and release vapors. Some vapors coming from these materials at this point in the fire are as flammable as gasoline vapors. When the room becomes rich enough with vapors, the fire will move across the room in one rapid sweep. It only takes a couple of seconds under these conditions for the fire to change from the small incipient stage to a fully involved room. This is called, "flashover," in a 10 x 10 ft. room, it may happen in as little as two minutes. People can become trapped because they don't realize how fast the situation can change.



Once a fire flashes over in a room, it will begin to spread rapidly throughout the building. The number and location of open doors will directly affect the speed and direction the fire will take. Heated gases created by the fire will be forced from the room rapidly because they are expanding. In fire tests, these gases have been seen to carry the fire down the hall at a rate of a hundred feet in ten seconds. This deadly speed is only possible when doors are non-existent or are open.

Closing any door in the path of a fire slows its spread for a time. How much time depends on the material and the construction of the door. Ordinary room doors will confine a fire for three to five minutes. Sometimes that confinement can last longer.

Family Fire Safety Plan

Apartments

If there is a fire in your apartment, get everyone out first and confine the fire by closing the doors. Activate the alarm to both the building and the fire department. The same steps that were taken in a house should be followed in an apartment fire. It is important to slow the fire spread so other people will have time to evacuate the building, should it become necessary. In this case, notification includes notifying the other tenants as well as the fire department. This may be done by activating the fire alarm system if the building has one, or by knocking on doors.



If you hear an alarm or smell smoke but do not know where the fire is, evacuate but be cautious. Exit the door after feeling to see if it is hot. If it is hot, don't open it. Try another way or if there is no other way, follow the advice given under "What to Do If You Are Trapped in a Room or Apartment". If you don't know where the fire is, it could be below you. Check every closed door that you have to open including fire doors in the hallway and stairway doors. There could be fire on the other side. **Never use an elevator!**

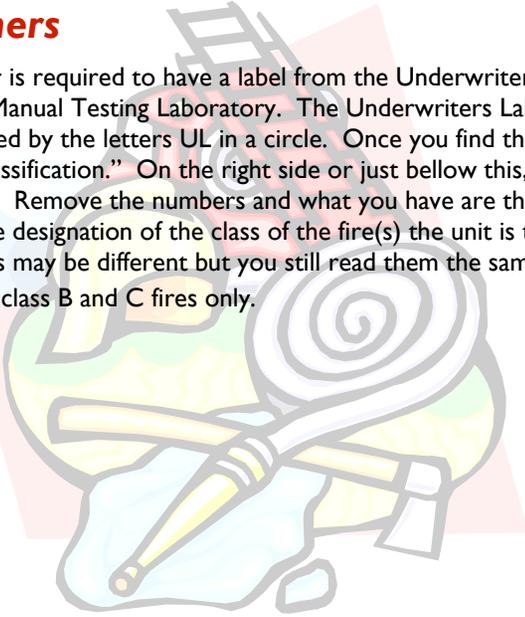
Become familiar with your building. Learn where all the stairways are located and in the case of a building 3 or more stories in height, find out which stairways give you the most options. For instance, some stairways have two doors at the bottom, one that goes into the building and one that goes directly to the outside.

Some stairways go to the roof, some don't. In some buildings, this can be a practical escape option. In multi-story buildings in Pasadena, you should find signs in the stairwell landings that will give you this information. Know how to operate the fire alarm if the building is equipped with them. Fire doors in halls should never be blocked open for any reason. These doors are to provide a barrier between you and the fire.

Types of Fire Extinguishers

Extinguishers

Each extinguisher is required to have a label from the Underwriters Laboratory or Factory Mutual Testing Laboratory. The Underwriters Laboratory labels are identified by the letters UL in a circle. Once you find the label, look for the word "classification." On the right side or just below this, you will see "2-A:10-BC." Remove the numbers and what you have are the letters "ABC," this is the designation of the class of the fire(s) the unit is to be used on. The numbers may be different but you still read them the same, i.e., 60-BC would be for class B and C fires only.



Classification of Fires

"A"- type fires are common combustibles, i.e., wood, paper, cloth

"B"- type fires are flammable liquids, i.e., gas, oil, grease

"C"- type fires are electronically energized fires, i.e., computers, toasters, heaters, appliances.



Types of Fire Extinguishers

Classifications of Fire Extinguishers

Water

These are stainless steel, weight about 35 lbs., and holds 2 ½ gallons. They will reach up to about 35 ft., and last approximately 1 minute. These are for Class "A" fires only. They cannot be used on electrical or flammable liquid fires. This type works better as a spray by putting your finger over the end of the nozzle.

Dry Chemical – Recommended

The best general purpose extinguisher. Comes in "BC" or "ABC" (multi – purpose). Available in different sizes. It has a range of 8 to 12 ft. It will empty in 10 to 20 seconds. This is an excellent choice for home use. It can be messy when used, but it is nontoxic. We recommend all homes have at least two dry chemical – type fire extinguishers (at least one per floor) with a minimum size rating of a **2A – 10BC**, including an earthquake-restraining strap, a hose-type nozzle, and metal head.

Carbon Dioxide (CO₂)



These are "BC" only. It is a gas that smothers the fire. They do not have a gauge. They reach about 2 to 5 ft., you have to get fairly close to the fire. For that reason, always give a test shot before committing to the fire. Do not hold the cone-shaped nozzle because it may freeze to your hand.

Halon – Type

These are also "BC" only. They come in various sizes. They are used in specialized applications involving electronics and aircraft. Older types are illegal