



TDCJ Risk Management's *Training Circular*

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October FIRE PROTECTION



When October rolls around most of us think about fall, raking leaves, cooler weather, fall festivals, and Christmas being only two



months away. But how many of us think about fire escape plans, fire extinguishers or fire alarms? Most of us only think about the smoke alarms when the battery gets low and the chirping starts driving you nuts. Should we only think about these things when we need them? No, because then it might be too late. Thousands of people die in house fires or building fires yearly and through education and practice this numbers can and will be reduced. October is nationally recognized as Fire Prevention Month. TDCJ also conducts annual fire safety awareness



training for unit staff, administration staff and unit offenders.

FACTS AND FIGURES

According to the National Fire Protection Association a 2004 survey found that 96% of U.S. households had at least one smoke alarm, yet in 2000-2004, no smoke alarms were present or none operated in almost half (46%) of the reported home fires. An estimated 890 lives could be saved each year if all homes had working smoke alarms. 65% of reported home fire deaths in 2000-2004 resulted from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.

SMOKE ALARMS

One of the most important fire safety devices for the home is the smoke alarm. After becoming generally available in the early 1970's home smoke alarm sales grew rapidly and the price fell, so that by 1991, 88% of US homes had at least one, and alarms could be purchased for under \$10.

Several studies have concluded that when working smoke alarms are present, the chance of dying from the fire is cut in half. The smoke alarms currently in place have saved thousands of lives, but several problems exist. First, the 12% of homes without alarms have more than half of the fires; second, it is estimated that a third of the smoke alarms in place are not working, often due to failure to replace a worn out battery; and third, many homes do not have as many smoke alarms



that are needed to protect the occupants properly.

*Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including the basement area. Many fatal fires begin late at night or the early morning. For extra safety, install smoke alarms both inside and outside of sleeping areas. Installing your smoke alarms at the proper level will provide you with the earliest warning possible.



*Install according to manufacturer's installation instructions.
 *Don't install smoke alarms near windows, ducts where drafts might interfere with operation.
 *Don't paint your smoke alarms; paint or other decorations could keep the alarms from working properly.
 *Test your smoke alarm at least once a month by using the alarms "test button".
 *Replace the batteries in your smoke alarm once a year, or as soon as the warning 'chirps' that the battery is low.



HELPFUL HINTS

- ◆ Schedule battery replacement for the same day you change your clock from daylight to standard time in the fall, pick a holiday or your birthday.
- ◆ Never "borrow" a battery from a smoke alarm.
- ◆ Replace your smoke alarm every 10 years.
- ◆ Regularly vacuuming or dusting your smoke alarm following manufacturer's instructions can help keep it working properly.
- ◆ Ensure everyone in your home or office area can hear and recognize the sound of the alarm and knows the fire escape plans.



FIRE EXTINGUISHER USE

Retrieve fire extinguisher

- P**ull pin - This allows you to activate the extinguisher.
- A**im - Hold hose and point at the base of the fire.



Squeeze - The trigger mechanism to release the agent.

Sweep - Back and forth at the base of the base.

Remember when you are trying to extinguish a fire the 4-letter word - **PASS**.



FIRE EXTINGUISHER CLASS

Would you know what fire extinguisher to use?



Class **A** Fire

Paper, wood, cloth, etc. where quenching by water or insulating by general purpose dry chemical is effective.



Class **B** Fire

Burning liquids (gasoline, oils, cooking fats and etc) where smothering action is required.



Class C Fire

Fire in live electrical equipment (motors, switches, computers and etc.) where a non-conductive extinguishing agent is required.



depends upon quickly leaving the area. It has been proven that fire drills reduce chances of panic and injury in fires and through training and being informed you have a much better chance to survive a fire. Knowing your fire escape plan can mean the difference between life and death. Be prepared to act quickly.

Now that you have some understanding of fire prevention, Remember:

- 🔔 Get out **FIRST**.
- 🔔 **STAY** out.
- 🔔 **Call 911**.

**Class K Fire**

Designed specifically for kitchen grease fire hazards and are now required for extinguishers installed in commercial kitchens.



⇒ Ensure everyone in your office, building, and home knows the evacuation routes and the exit door locations, including windows.

⇒ Ensure everyone understands where the areas of safe refuge is located.

⇒ Test all smoke alarms monthly to ensure that they work. Replace batteries, as needed.

⇒ **Remember to get out first, then call for help. Never go back inside for anything, until the fire department has given the OK.**

**Fire Escape Plans**

Everyone in the area must know what to do in the event of a fire in their area. A fire escape plan must be created and practiced so that everyone knows what to do. It is also very important to practice fire drills. Regardless of the cause of a fire, the area may be filled with smoke. This is a very dangerous situation and you may not be able to see very well. The smoke and toxic gases may cause dizziness and disorientation. In the confusion, one can easily become lost or trapped in a building. Everyone must understand that their safety

⇒ Once you are out, **STAY OUT**, and away - leave the fire fighting to professionals.



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