

## **G. Emergency and Safety Skills**

### **Basic**

Knows functions of police, ambulance, fire department, and can reach by calling appropriate number	"Emergency Phone Numbers" Worksheet E-15
Knows how to evacuate residence in case of a fire	E-1, 2; Use outline of client's home to identify potential evacuation routes
Knows proper way of disposing of smoking materials, if smokes	E-3
Knows how to check smoke alarm and how to replace battery	Demonstration of skill followed by practice
Knows how to lock/unlock doors/windows	Demonstration of skill followed by practice

Independent Living Skills Module II



ACTIVITY

Research emergency numbers in your community and write them in the Emergency list below. Post the list in a visible place nearby a telephone.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS
FIRE
POLICE Emergency
POLICE Non-Emergency
MEDICAL Emergency
AMBULANCE
HOSPITAL
DOCTOR
POISON
GAS COMPANY Emergency
OTHERS:



Independent Living Skills Module II

## FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION

Did you know that most fatal fires occur when people are sleeping, usually between Midnight and 6 a.m.?

It's true! This is one reason why it's so important to have smoke detectors/alarms in your home or apartment. They will wake you when there is a fire, giving you time to escape. People who don't have smoke detectors may not wake up in time to escape the killing heat, smoke, and flames of a house fire.

### More Fire Safety Information Follows:

- Most fire deaths occur from smoke rather than burns. As a house fire burns, it gives off toxic gases, often carbon monoxide, which can kill.
- Smoke detectors are, therefore, one of the most important life saving devices you can own. Every home/apartment should have at least one smoke detector. Under Massachusetts law, landlords must provide smoke detectors in a building with three or more apartments. In some cities, such as Boston, all homes and apartments must have smoke detectors.
- Fire extinguishers can be used to put out small fires and can help clear an escape route. Don't waste time trying to put out a house fire, however; that's the fireman's job. Your job is to escape.
- Multi-purpose fire extinguishers are important household safety devices. The extinguishers labeled "ABC" are the best ones to buy; they can put out most fire -- wood, paper, cloth, flammable liquids, and electrical wires/appliances.
- Don't use water on a grease fire. Instead use baking soda, a fire extinguisher, sand, etc.
- If your bedroom is above the first floor and you don't have a fire escape stairway outside one of your bedroom windows, you should have a fire escape ladder. Should the stairway ever be blocked by fire, you'll have an escape route from the window. Fire escape ladders are collapsible and can be stored in a closet or under the bed.
- You should always sleep with your bedroom door closed. Should a fire occur, the closed door will temporarily hold back the heat and the smoke.
- Plan your fire escape route and have practice fire drills regularly.

What would you do first if you woke up at night and discovered there was a fire in your home and the smoke alarms were blaring?

Independent Living Skills Module II

Fire Escape Tips:

Roll from the bed. Do not sit up and jump out of bed. The air temperature at the level of the bed will be cooler (although it will be probably warmer than 100 degrees) than the air a few feet above the bed (probably 200 degrees or more).

Fire officials recommend that you roll from the bed to the floor. Temperatures will be lowest there. Then crawl along the floor where the air will be less smoky and the heat less intense. Cover your nose and mouth with a cloth (if possible, a wet cloth).

Touch the door before you open it. If it is hot to the touch, do not open it. Use another escape route. If it's cool, brace your shoulder against the door and open it slowly. Be ready to slam it if smoke or heat rush in.

Get out quickly!

Do not waste time trying to put out the fire.

Call the fire department from a neighbors house.

Every second counts!

If you cannot escape through the door, use the window. If you're on the first floor, you're in luck. If not, choose a window that overlooks a ledge or roof that you can climb onto and wait for help to arrive.

Remember, if you sleep above the first floor and do not have a fire escape stairway outside one of your bedroom windows, you should have a fire escape ladder. If no ladder is available, straddle the window sill by putting one leg out the window and keeping the other inside.

Keep your head outside and wait for help.

Three very important words to remember if your clothes ever catch fire are:

STOP -- Stop where you are. Do not run.

DROP -- Drop to the ground or floor and cover your face with your hands.

ROLL -- Roll across the ground to smother the flames.

Treatment: Cool the burn immediately with cool water only.

## How to Properly Dispose of Smoking Materials

### **Smoking**

*The number one cause of fatal fires in the United States is smoking materials. The leading causes of smoking-related fires, injury and death are the following: improperly discarded smoking materials, abandoned smoking materials, and misuse of smoking materials.*

### **Safety Tips:**

- Provide large/deep ashtrays throughout any areas where smoking is permitted.
- Do a "house check" before retiring if smoking took place during the day.
- Dispose of used smoking materials and ashes in safe metal containers, by simply dousing in water or by flushing down the toilet.
- Post "no smoking" signs in areas where flammable liquid may be stored or used.
- Extinguish all smoking materials before beginning to pump gasoline.
- Keep matches and lighters up high, out of the reach of children, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- Provide supervision for people in high-risk situations; the bedridden, chronically diseased, handicapped, heavy medicine, or alcohol users.
- Avoid smoking when drowsy, and NEVER smoke in bed.
- Check armchairs and sofas for lit embers and sparks after a person has been smoking – an ember can smolder for hours and burst into flames after the household has gone to bed.

### **Facts and Figures:**

- According to the U.S. Fire Administration and the National Fire Academy, smoking materials are the number one cause of fatal fires in the U.S.
- Males (especially ages 75 and up) have a much higher death rate, which relates to their overall portion of the general population and the smoking population.
- Adults and the elderly are especially in danger from serious burn injury and possible death when smoking materials are used in combination with drugs, alcohol or certain prescription medications.
- The most common problem areas in the home include the living and entertainment areas.
- Falling asleep in the bedroom or in a favorite lounge chair can mean disaster when you have a lit cigarette in your hand.
- Flammable liquids in the garage, shop area or basement and improper use or discarded smoking materials can prove to be a deadly combination.
- Improper use or disposal of smoking materials in places of public assembly poses great danger to many people.
- A frequent site of burn injury to teens and young adults is at the gas pump.

© Burn Institute. [Legal Notices](#).