

4/20/2005

## **EDUCATIONAL MESSAGES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of the Educational Messages Advisory Committee is to provide expert advice to NFPA public education staff on fire safety education messages.

### **GOALS:**

- ❖ Review current educational messages and determine if the message is still appropriate, research is needed to validate the message, or if the message needs to be revised.
- ❖ Produce an educational messages document to be made available on the NFPA Web site.

## **Official NFPA Educational Messages**

### **SMOKE ALARMS**

#### **Installation**

- ❖ Install smoke alarms on every level of the home and outside each sleeping area. For new homes, interconnected smoke alarms are required on every level of the home, outside each sleeping area and inside each bedroom. Although this approach is ideal for all homes, as a minimum, existing homes should have smoke alarms on every level and outside each sleeping area.

#### **Testing**

- ❖ Working smoke alarms save lives. Test smoke alarms every month.

#### **Deaf or hard of hearing**

- ❖ Special smoke alarms are made for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

#### **Sleeping with bedroom door open or closed**

- ❖ Make sure everyone can hear the sound of the smoke alarms. Know what your smoke alarms sound like. If you sleep with bedroom doors closed, have interconnected smoke alarms.

#### **Children waking to the sound of the smoke alarm**

- ❖ Some studies have shown that some children may not awaken to the sound of the smoke alarm. Know what your child will do before a fire occurs. For more on this issue, smoke alarms, and escape planning visit [www.nfpa.org/factsheets](http://www.nfpa.org/factsheets).

### **Smoke Alarm Replacement**

- ❖ Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.

### **Fire deaths - No smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms**

- ❖ Roughly 70 percent of home fire deaths result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.

## **ESCAPE**

### **Assistance to others during escape**

- ❖ When there is a fire, caregivers are responsible for getting children out safely.
- ❖ Children must know how to escape on their own in case the caregiver cannot provide assistance. If someone is trapped in the home, inform firefighters right away.

### **Pets**

- ❖ If pets are trapped inside your home, inform firefighters right away.

### **Smoke**

- ❖ Smoke is toxic. If you must escape through smoke, get low and go under the smoke to your exit.

### **Use of escape ladders**

- ❖ Consider getting escape ladders for sleeping areas on the second and third floors. Make sure escape ladder fits the window. Use only if all other exits are blocked. Practice opening the ladder, dropping it out the window, but not using it.

### **Feel the door procedure**

- ❖ Before opening a door, feel the door. If it's hot, use your second way out.

### **Planning**

- ❖ Have a home escape plan and practice it twice a year.
- ❖ Make sure emergency personnel can see your house numbers from the street.
- ❖ Choose an outside meeting place. The meeting place should be in front and away from the house and should be something permanent like a tree or neighbor's home.

- ❖ Find all doors and windows that lead outside. Make sure they open easily. Know at least two ways out of every room, if possible.
- ❖ For homes with a second or third level, consider escape ladders.
- ❖ When a smoke alarm sounds, or there is smoke or fire, get out and stay out.
- ❖ Closed doors help protect you. Close doors as you escape to slow the spread of smoke and fire.
- ❖ Go to your outside meeting place.
- ❖ After you have escaped, call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number.
- ❖ If you are trapped, close the door to keep smoke out, call for help and wait by the window for rescue.
- ❖ Wherever you are, have an escape plan.

## **BURNS**

- ❖ Treat a burn right away, putting it in cool water. Cool the burn for three to five minutes. Cover the burn with a clean, dry cloth. When in doubt, seek medical attention.

## **SMOKING**

- ❖ If you smoke, smoke outside.
- ❖ Wherever you smoke, use deep, sturdy ashtrays.
- ❖ Before you throw out butts and ashes, make sure they are out, and dowsing in water or sand is the best way to do that.
- ❖ Check under furniture cushions and in other places people smoke for cigarette butts that may have fallen out of sight.
- ❖ Smoking should not be allowed in a home where oxygen is being used.
- ❖ If you smoke, choose fire-safe cigarettes. They are less likely to cause fires.

- ❖ To prevent a deadly cigarette fire, you have to be alert. You won't be if you are sleepy, have been drinking, or have taken medicine or other drugs.

## **CANDLES**

- ❖ Keep candles at least one foot from anything that can burn.
- ❖ Use sturdy, safe candleholders.
- ❖ Never leave a burning candle unattended. Blow out candles when you leave a room.
- ❖ NFPA discourages the use of candles in bedrooms and sleeping areas.
- ❖ Use a flashlight, not a candle for emergency lighting.
- ❖ Be careful not to splatter wax when extinguishing a candle.

## **STOP, DROP, AND ROLL**

- ❖ If your clothes catch fire, stop, drop, and roll. Stop immediately, drop to the ground, and cover face with hands. Roll over and over or back and forth to put out the fire.

## **FIRE EXTINGUISHERS**

- ❖ Fire extinguishers have limits. Learn and practice how to use fire extinguishers before a fire occurs.