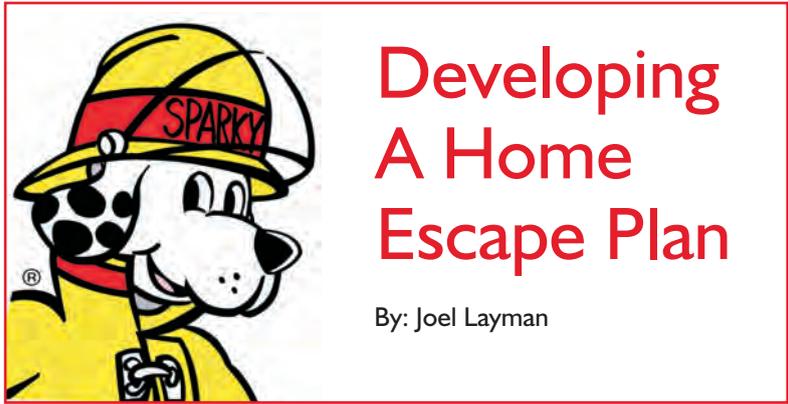


Fire Prevention Week is October 8-14, 2017. This year, the Ontario Fire Marshall's office has a focus on creating a fire plan for your home. As you and your family settle back into the regular routine of the fall, take an hour to make a fire escape plan. Smoke and fire spread fast. There's no time to figure out how to escape after a fire starts.

Developing A Home Escape Plan

- 1) Draw a floor plan of your home. Your plan needs to include every room, so if your home is more than one storey, draw each level on a different sheet of paper.
- 2) Include all possible emergency exits. This means all doors, windows and stairways. Remember, you may not be able to get to the front door in a fire, so knowing all the routes to safety are important.
- 3) If possible, have two ways out of every room. The first choice will be the door, but if the door is blocked by smoke or fire, you need a back-up exit. This will



Developing A Home Escape Plan

By: Joel Layman

- probably be a window, but it could be the door to an adjoining room, or patio doors, depending on the home. Make sure everyone knows how to open the windows if they need to escape that way. If your windows have childproof or other locking mechanisms, make sure people know how to get around them.
- 4) Determine who might need help. If you have younger, older or disabled people in your home, decide how those people will be helped. Remember, babies will need different help than an adult with low mobility.
- 5) Have a meeting place. You

- may not all be together when exiting a house during a fire, so pick a place that everyone will meet at when they escape. It might be a neighbour's home, but it could be the mailbox or large tree or other place away from the home. Make sure everyone knows that their job is to get to that meeting place.
- 6) Call 9-1-1 from outside. Your first priority is safety. Your second is to call the fire department. Trying to call the fire department while being frantic inside the home will waste time that could be needed to get everyone out safely.

7) Practice your plan. Go through the escape plan with everyone in the family, and in every room of the home. Make any adjustments to the plan that might be necessary as people test it out. Then, hold a fire drill twice a year for practice. Everyone should be able to react without hesitation. (If you have older or younger people in the home, practising twice a year helps modify any plans as mobility issues increase or decrease.)

Finally, you should have smoke alarms on every storey of the home and outside of all sleeping areas. Do a battery replacement of the alarms when you do your drills to ensure they are in working order. A smoke alarm could save your life.

ASK THE EXPERT:

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