



## Palm Beach County Fire Rescue - Community Education

*Be prepared and have a plan for fire evacuation*

# Home Fire Evacuation

Fire is fast, hot, dark and deadly. In less than 3 minutes a small flame can get completely out of control filling your home with thick black smoke. It's imperative you and your family know what to do before fire strikes.



### Create and practice a plan

- Have two ways out from every room—a secondary route may be a window onto a neighboring roof or an escape ladder.
- Make sure everyone can open the windows, including screens and security bars.
- Keep exits clear.
- Practice feeling your way out of the house to your meeting place in the dark or with your eyes closed.

### During a fire

- If smoke is blocking your first way out, try your second. If you must go through smoke, crawl low where the air is cleaner and get out quickly.
- Go to your outside meeting place and then call 911.
- If a family member or pet is still inside, tell the 911 operator and alert firefighters immediately upon their arrival.
- Never go back into the home.

### Have and practice a plan.

Two ways out of every room, crawl low under smoke. **Get out and stay out.**

Never go back inside.



**Apartments, condos and high rise buildings** present unique challenges for evacuation. If the fire is not in your unit, it may be part of your emergency plan to shelter in place.

### **Area of refuge**

- If you are unable to use exit stairs, find a safe location to wait for assistance from firefighters.
- An ideal area of refuge would be an enclosed room—near an exit stairwell— that has a door, a window and a telephone.
- The landing of an exit stairwell may also be used for refuge and may have two-way communication available. Fully sprinklered buildings will have two-way communication systems at elevator landings.

### **Sheltering in place**

- Keep the door to the room or stairwell closed.
- Use towels or clothing to block openings around doors or vents.
- If smoke enters the space, stay low to the floor to breathe the best air.
- Put a wet cloth over your mouth or nose.
- Alert 911 to your location.