



## SELECT RESIDENTIAL / BARN FIRE INFO. FIRE STATS.

- Fire departments respond to fires every 24 seconds.<sup>1</sup>
- A structure fire is reported every 66 seconds.<sup>1</sup>
- Fires double in size every 60 seconds.<sup>1</sup>
- A small flame can turn into a major fire in 30 seconds.<sup>3</sup>
- There may be as little as 2 minutes to get to safety.<sup>3</sup>
- A civilian is hurt by fire every 34 minutes.<sup>1</sup>
- A civilian dies because of fire every 2:35.<sup>1</sup>
- A home fire is reported every 90 seconds.<sup>1</sup>
- 3 out of 5 home fire deaths occur in residences without a working smoke alarm.<sup>1</sup>
- 7 people die every day from a home fire; children & the elderly are most impacted.<sup>2</sup>
- Rough 40K pets die (500K injured) each year in fires<sup>4</sup>



<sup>1</sup> National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 2016    <sup>2</sup> American Red Cross    <sup>3</sup> Ready.gov / FEMA    <sup>4</sup> NW Vet Specialists

## BEFORE YOU FIGHT A FIRE

- Everyone else is evacuating and someone is calling for help
- Be sure you, too, have a clear, unencumbered escape route
- Be sure the fire is small, confined, and not spreading
- Be sure the extinguisher you have is the right kind for the type of fire you're dealing with
- Be sure you know how to use the fire extinguisher

Consider writing these points on each of your fire extinguishers with a permanent marker as reminders before you attempt to fight a fire. You might also jot down a prompt to aim at the base of the fire and sweep side to side while backing out of the room.

## IMPORTANT ALARM INFO.

### THERE ARE 2 DIFFERENT KINDS

- Ionization may respond slightly faster to fast, flaming fires (they are cheaper & most common).
- Photoelectric may respond slightly faster to slow, smoldering fires.

Neither is universally better at detecting all types of fires because each operates differently. Therefore, they respond differently in various conditions. Studies show both types will effectively detect either type of fire. But many disagree. Installing both can enhance fire safety. Dual sensor alarms are available, though they two different kinds aren't typically installed side-by-side.

2 Kinds of Smoke Alarms Video    [youtube.com/watch?v=zrOLxh8GuCU&t=5s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrOLxh8GuCU&t=5s)

2 Kinds of Alarms Article    <http://learnnec.net/wp/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/smoke-alarms1.pdf>

### ALARM TIPS

- Don't remove batteries; replace retire unit when long-life batteries expire.
- Install in any barns as well as homes.
- Test monthly (using a stick or broom to depress the test button)
  - Use the same time each month to crate train household pets and halter train / trailer load train large animals
  - Train household pets to come to the bedroom or exterior door when alarms go off

## IMPORTANT ALARM INFO., continued

### **DETECTORS & SPRINKLERS**

Your local fire department is your best source for info. as well as current requirements in your area.

In fact, many have materials and literature available – some even install free detectors.

Ask your fire department about the difference between ionization and photoelectric detectors – they work differently and BOTH are needed throughout each unit to provide proper warning in different situations.

The gold standard for fire safety in any building is a sprinkler system. They have their pros and cons -- they can be very expensive to install and expensive in terms of water damage when they go off -- but in terms of life safety they're the best. Again, local building code may require it in commercial and / or multi-family construction.

To assure a battery is installed and the unit is working properly, the test button should be used. Don't light a match and blow smoke under the detector – smoke particles can gum up the device and prevent it from going off when it's needed. In fact, regular household dust and cobwebs can similarly be problematic.

Many jurisdictions mandate where detectors must be installed and that long-life (typically 10-year) batteries be used. Often models with a hush button are also required so that they can be quickly silenced during a false alarm without disassembling the unit.

And don't forget carbon monoxide detectors! Your fire department can likewise inform you if they're required in your area based on the kind of property you have, what kind to buy and where to install them.

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### STEPS TO TAKE NOW

A few precautions to take now:

- Assure you have both kinds of smoke alarms; that each are working and less than 10 years old
- Do a visual and push-button check of each detector routinely.
- Check building wiring for any obvious damage or concern as well as cords and plugs inside. Remember not to overload circuits.
- Have (and practice) an evacuation plan and to follow manufacturer instructions to clean or vacuum the alarms routinely.



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### EVACUATION CONSIDERATIONS

Know at least two ways out of every room. Regularly practice the plan with all members of the household including animals, any guests and, ideally, neighbors.

#### **CONSIDER WHAT YOU'LL DO IF YOU**

- live in a unit above or below ground level,
- have family members (including animals and / or guests), who may require assistance due to physical or cognitive challenges, or
- someone becomes injured or incapacitated in the process of evacuating.

There are not always be happy answers when disaster strikes, but the more time spent considering various 'what-ifs' the more likely survival is.

## EVACUATION CONSIDERATIONS, continued

### **GET LOW & GO!**

- No one should try to extinguish a fire with a standard household extinguisher if it has grown larger than the size of a small waste paper basket – the kind you might have alongside a desk. Fire fighters are adamant – use the time to get low and get go!
- Plan a schedule of fire drills throughout the year.  
Smoke from modern floor coverings and furnishings is highly toxic and can create a dark smoke that completely eliminates visibility in a matter of seconds.
- Smoke rises, leaving the fresher air down close to the floor.
- Encourage all to practice by closing their eyes and getting down on the floor to get familiar with navigating in blackout conditions on their hands and knees.
- Heat and smoke are much more dangerous than the flames and there will likely only be a matter of seconds to escape. Trust your instincts and create muscle memory through practice so you don't have to think about what to do.

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DID YOU KNOW? HOME FIRES SPIKE the 4<sup>TH</sup> QUARTER OF EACH YEAR!



Home fires spike dramatically between Halloween and New Year's due to increased use of everything from candles, space heaters, dried out Christmas trees, and turkey fryers.

In addition, electrical problems are often exacerbated by increased electrical use for heating and / or décor.

When you layer on top of that holiday festivities that often involve alcohol, the combination is a two month-long recipe for disaster.

FEMA and National Fire Incident Reporting System have found that 40% percent of decoration fires originate with candles and 33% of Christmas tree fires stem from underlying electrical problems.

### **HOLIDAY FIRE SAFETY TIPS**

- Never leave lit candles, lit cigarettes, and cooking food unattended.
- Candles should be kept at least 12" from flammables; better yet, opt for battery-operated models.
- For those who decorate look for décor that's flame resistant or retardant.
- All Christmas trees should keep them at least 3' from fireplaces, radiators, space heaters, candles, and heat vents. They must be kept watered and removed from the home before the needles dry out.