

# A Time To Act

*This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.*

[Announcer] CDC-TV Presents: Health Matters.

[Katrina Thornton] One minute it was just, like a little flame on the wall where the outlet was and the next thing you know, it was busting out windows in the back!

[Announcer] Firefighters say that Katrina Thornton and her children are examples of how to keep your family safe in the event of a fire. Everyone did get out safely after fire hit their home. It happened just days after the fire department installed two smoke alarms during a safety inspection.

[Shane Diekman] Residential fires are a public health problem that affects many people; fortunately, many residential fires are preventable.

[Lavon Cooper] People think it won't happen to me, it can't happen to me; it's going to happen to somebody down the road, but reality is, 80 percent of fires occur in the home.

[Shane Diekman] Cooking is the leading cause of fire injuries in the home.

If you're cooking be sure that you're close to the stove. It's very easy to become distracted or to stop paying attention while you're cooking, which is the leading cause of cooking fires.

[Lavon Cooper] Smoking is the number one cause of fire deaths around the nation.

[Shane Diekman] CDC recommends that if you're a smoker, that you attempt to quit smoking. If you are going to smoke, you should smoke outside. Also, never smoke if you are under the influence of alcohol, medications, or if you're tired.

One in four home fire deaths are caused by smoking materials.

If you're smoking, it's important that you use an ash tray that is deep, that is sturdy, and it's also on a balanced and level surface.

The toxic gases and dark smoke that can result from a fire is a bigger problem than many people realize.

[Capt. Eric Jackson] Someone can virtually be overcome by smoke in just a matter of minutes.

[Lavon Cooper] Fire really does multiply itself really quickly; the toxic gases spread really quickly and they fill up the area.

[Shane Diekman] In fact, in as quickly as 30 seconds a room can fill up this type of smoke.

[Lavon Cooper] Smoke alarms save lives. It doubles your chance of surviving a fire to have working smoke alarms installed in your house.

[Capt. Eric Jackson] And not just having a smoke alarm but having a smoke alarm that is, been installed and that is tested once a month to make sure that it's working.

[Shane Diekman] CDC recommends that you have smoke alarms on every level of the home, including the basement. You should also have smoke alarms outside of sleeping areas.

For better protection, CDC also recommends that you have smoke alarms inside of every sleeping area, especially if it's occupied by a smoker.

[Capt. Eric Jackson] Fire prevention means having a fire escape plan, and not just having the plan on paper magnetized to a refrigerator, but actually sitting down at the table and having a family planning meeting...

[Father] And if you can get downstairs, that's the best thing to do, and you run right out the front door.

[Capt. Eric Jackson] ...about how we're going to get out of our home in the event that a fire happens.

[Shane Diekman] CDC and experts in the fire prevention field recommend that you practice your fire escape plan at least twice a year.

[Capt. Eric Jackson] That's something that increases your chances of getting out, and for us, that's a success story!

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