



**Northern Ireland
Fire & Rescue Service**

Protecting Our Community

COMMUNITY INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 4

FIRE ESCAPE PLAN

It is very important that all your family know what to do if there is a fire in your home and how to escape safely. You should prepare a Fire Escape Plan for your home and practise it regularly. Plan together as a family, this doesn't take long but it could save lives.

Initial points you should consider:

- Who is usually in the property?
- How will they know if there's a fire?
- If there are vulnerable people, who will raise the alarm and help them?
- Slips, trips and falls are the number one reason older people are taken to the emergency department in a hospital. Most falls don't cause serious injury but they can leave you distressed.
- It is important to keep escape routes clear to minimise trip hazards.

Plan A

- The first choice of escape is normally through the main door, that's the door you normally use to enter and leave your home.
- Always close it behind you once everyone is out of the building.
- Make sure escape routes are kept clear and free from obstacles that could block or delay your escape.
- Ensure everyone knows where the keys are kept for final exit doors; they should be kept close to the door.
- Have an assembly point outside and make sure everyone knows its location.
- Take a few minutes to practise your escape plan.
- If you discover a fire, close the door of the room where the fire is, only if it is safe to do so.
- Keep calm and act quickly; get everyone out as soon as possible.
- If there is smoke, keep low where the air is clearer.
- Don't put your life at risk investigating what's happened or rescuing pets or valuables.
- Before you open a door check for signs of smoke or if it's warm. If it is, don't open it, fire is on the other side.
- Call 999 as soon as you're clear of the building. 999 calls are free.
- Review your plan if the layout of your home changes.

Plan B

- If it's not safe to leave by the main door, how else could you escape?
- Is there another door you could use or a fire escape?
- Could you climb out of a ground floor window?
- Could you climb out of a first floor window onto a garage roof or an extension and climb down safely?
- If you're no higher than the first floor could you escape through a window using bedding to cushion your fall? **Remember!** Lower yourself by the full length of your arms. Land with your knees bent. Don't jump!

If neither Plan A nor B is safe, you'll need to shelter somewhere:

- Choose a room with a phone and a window that opens, the bigger the window opening the better.
- Stay together, you will be calmer if you are all together and it will be easier for the Fire Service to help you.
- Dial 999 and ask for the Fire Service.
- Pack blankets and clothes around the door to keep smoke out.
- Stay by the window and shout '**help**' or '**fire**'.
- If there's smoke, keep low where the air is clearer.
- Hang a towel or similar item from the window to let firefighters know your location.

If you have a fire, always remember:

Get out, stay out and get the Fire Service out.

For further information phone NIFRS HQ 028 9266 4221 or visit www.nifrs.org



#STOPfire