

Home Fire Escape Plan

What you need to know



FEBRUARY 2019

- Only the person waiting to meet the fire service should stay at the fire. If possible, the rest of the family, especially the children, should take shelter with friends and neighbours to reduce the trauma of the event.

If you live in a multi-level home or an apartment your Home Fire Escape Plan should include escape routes from upper levels. Do not use lifts if there is a fire. Your best protection is to increase the number of smoke alarms in the house, and have them interconnected, to give you maximum warning of fire. Have a mobile phone or a hard-wired phone (not a portable or cordless phone) on the upper level if possible. Portable fire escape ladders are available but they are difficult to use and there are safety concerns associated with their use. If you are trapped in an upper storey, call 000, seal the opening around the door and any vents with bedding or clothing. Stay by the window and attract the attention of firefighters.

Further information

For further information and advice contact the MFS Community Safety and Resilience Department.
 Phone: **8204 3611**
 Country callers: **1300 737 637**
 Web: www.mfs.sa.gov.au
 Email: samfscommunitysafety@sa.gov.au



Hearing or speech impaired?
 Contact us via the National Relay Service
 TTY **133 677**
 Other contact options available at
www.communications.gov.au

Practise!

Once you have developed your Home Fire Escape Plan you must practise it. Involve all the people in the house, including the children. You may find that some part of the plan needs to be changed and it's better to find out in a practice than in a real fire!



When the plan is fine-tuned, PRACTISE IT EVERY SIX MONTHS so that everyone continues to be familiar with what they have to do.

Escape!

If there is a fire you must get out quickly! When the smoke alarm sounds start your escape immediately. Do not try to gather possessions or pets and once you get out NEVER re-enter the burning house.

The Quick Reference Escape Chart shows what to do, step by step. Tear it off and put it on your fridge door.

Other important information...

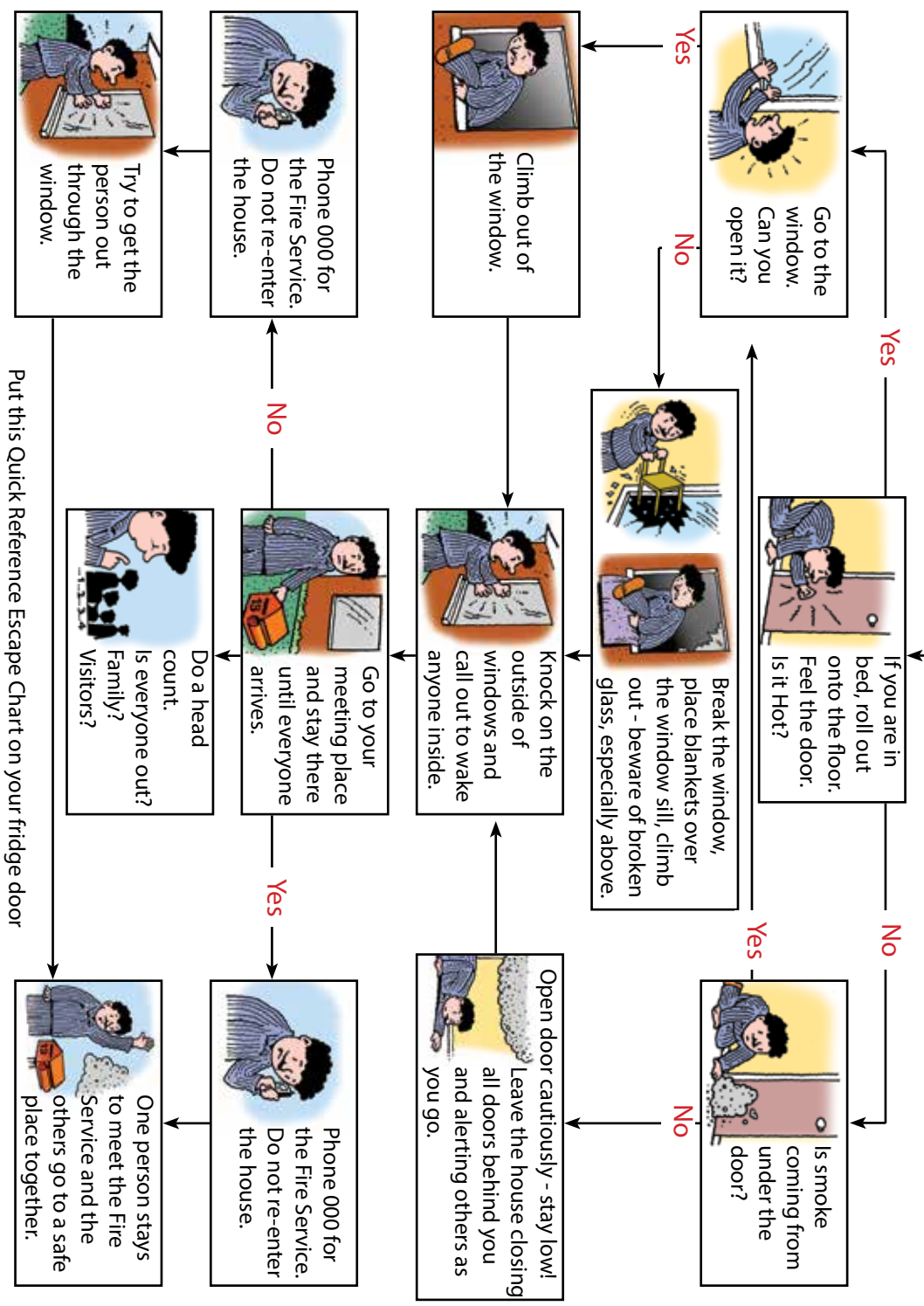
- Keep shoes, a torch and a mobile phone beside the bed.
- If possible you should include your family pets in your Plan. This may simply be that you provide the means for the dog or cat to escape. Never put your own life in danger to save a pet.



Quick Reference Escape Chart



The smoke alarm operates



Put this Quick Reference Escape Chart on your fridge door

Make a Home Fire Escape Plan TODAY! It could save your life TONIGHT!

Few people understand how quickly a fire takes hold in a house and how destructive it can be.

The thick black smoke from a house fire makes it difficult to see and breathe and the poisonous gases in the smoke can kill you. Many fires occur at night when people are asleep and they suffocate without ever waking and realising the danger.

A fire can reach extreme temperatures in a matter of seconds and it spreads quickly. A home can be totally consumed by fire in less than five minutes.

Everyone needs to PLAN what to do if there's a fire, then PRACTISE to make sure they know how to ESCAPE quickly and safely.

Plan and prepare It's not hard to make a Plan.

Step one

Install interconnected photo-electric smoke alarms and make sure that they are maintained and tested monthly.



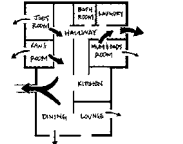
For the best protection the SA Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) recommends that you have 240 volt hard-wired, interconnected, photo-electric smoke alarms on every level of your home. They should be located in passage ways outside sleeping areas and, for the best protection, in sleeping areas and living rooms. (For more information about smoke alarms, their placement and their maintenance see the MFS pamphlet "Smoke Alarms".)

Step two

Bring everyone in your home together and work out the exits you will use if there is a fire.

Walk through your home and inspect all possible exits and escape routes. Where possible, everyone should know two ways out of every room - doors and windows.

A good, non-frightening way to involve children in this planning process is to get them to draw a plan of the house showing two exits from every room.



Babies and young children, the elderly and people with a disability will need help. Make sure that someone is given the job of helping them in an evacuation.

Make sure that any windows or doors in your home with security bars or grilles have quick release mechanisms on the inside. You must be able to open them quickly in an emergency. Make sure that everyone knows how to open all doors and windows.

And remember: If you need a key to open a door LEAVE THE KEY IN THE LOCK WHEN YOU ARE HOME! Don't be trapped inside the house!



Step three

Make sure that everyone knows the key steps to surviving a fire. They need to know:

- what the smoke alarm sounds like;
- they must get out of the house quickly when they hear the smoke alarm;
- how to crawl low under smoke, closing doors behind them as they leave;



- where to meet for a head count once they get outside - at the letterbox is often a good place;

- they should phone "000" from a mobile or neighbour's phone to get the fire service;



• they must NEVER go back into a burning building - if anyone is missing they should try to reach them from an outside window;

- Once the head count is done, someone should wait near the road to meet the fire service.



Home Fire Escape Plan Checklist



Install interconnected photo-electric smoke alarms. Maintain them and test them monthly.



Plan how you will get out if there is a fire

• there should be two ways out of every room where possible

• provide assistance for the very young and the incapacitated

• keep keys in locks when you are inside the house, and only fit grilles and shutters with quick release catches

• get out quickly when the smoke alarm sounds

Know the key steps to survival

• crawl low under smoke

• have a meeting place and do a head count

• phone 000 from a phone outside the house

• never go back into a burning house



Practise your Home Fire Escape Plan regularly with the whole family

