

## CREATE AN EVACUATION PLAN

Having an evacuation plan is very important for your family. In an emergency, every second counts, so you want to be as prepared as possible. Evacuation plans can be useful for many different types of disasters: earthquakes, flooding, hurricanes, snow storms, and statistically more common, house fires.

House fires are one of the most common disasters people face in this country so it is important that everyone has an evacuation or fire escape plan and practice it regularly. Everyone in your family should know the plan, even the little ones, so set aside an evening when the whole family can get together to make your emergency escape plan.

### Exit routes

Doors serve as the primary exits for escape routes. Windows provide a secondary means of escape. Every family member should know how to operate the windows used for fire emergencies. Delays in escaping from a fire can cost lives and increase injuries. Often, paint, dirt, or weathering can seal a window shut. Make sure your windows open easily from the inside and are not blocked by furniture or other objects. Avoid placing furniture such as beds, dressers, or toy chests under windows in the bedroom of children, as such furniture could impede a swift exit in an emergency. Do not install window air conditioners in windows that may be needed for escape or rescue in an emergency. The air conditioning unit could block or impede escape through the window. Always be sure that you have at least one window in each sleeping and living area that meets escape and rescue requirements.

### Points to remember when creating an evacuation escape plan for your home:

- Identify and mark at least two (2) escape routes from each room.
- Mark the locations of fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, first aid kits, and emergency supply kit
- For people with medical conditions or disabilities, mark their location as well as the location of any special equipment they will immediately need.
- Draw your building's floor plan, an evacuation route, and a meeting place. Make one drawing for each story of the building. Keep the drawing in a safe place and review often with your family.
- Practice using your emergency supply kit.

