

# A p a r t m e n t

## SAFETY

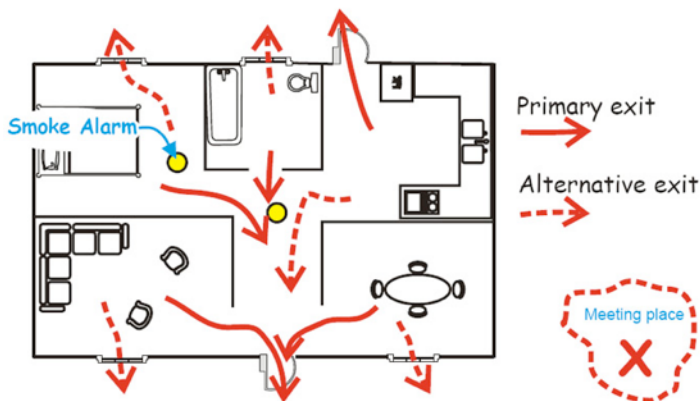


## NOTES

SPOKANE FIRE DEPARTMENT

October, 2012

# TWO WAYS OUT!



October means “Fire Prevention Month” and this year’s national reminder is to make sure that every room in every residence and every home in every neighborhood has “Two Ways Out” to safety.

Fire Prevention is emphasized around October 9<sup>th</sup> each year because of the devastation of The Great Chicago Fire that burned that day in 1871. By the time the fires were extinguished, over 100,000 people were homeless, 250 persons had died, and 17,000 structures were destroyed.

Whether at home or out in the community, it is important to have in mind a second way to exit any building or situation. Those who study human behavior tell us that, in an emergency, most people will only try the route they used to enter a building for their escape plan. Life requires more options! When you go to a theater or restaurant, think like a firefighter and note the alternative exits. When you check into a hotel, count the number of doorways between your room and the nearest exit so that you are prepared should you have to ever crawl and feel your way outside through toxic smoke and darkness. Encourage residents of apartment houses that have interior hallways to know the number of doorways between their unit and a safe exit.

Too often, we fail to think “what would happen if...?” That question haunts many persons after a fire tragedy. So take time now to consider the “what ifs”. Think of fire scenarios and evaluate the doors, windows, elevators, and hallways in your buildings that may be taken for granted on a regular day but that may truly become “dead-ends” in a fast-moving fire incident.

Could every tenant find adequate exiting should a fire start in the middle of the night? Is your building equipped to temporarily shelter someone in a wheelchair who cannot manage a stairwell? Does every household know the fire warning alarms, the escape plan and the meeting place?

- Fire doors: closed so that deadly smoke couldn’t fill hallways and reduce the ability to escape.
- Hallways: clear of extra furniture, decorations or bikes that may prevent residents or firefighters from easily crawling toward an exit.
- Windows: never covered with burglar bars lacking interior, easy-release handles.
- Doors: never blocked by storage just because they aren’t used on a daily basis.
- Locks: one-movement deadbolt locks rather than the double-keyed versions that can block a timely escape.
- Stairways and exit routes: equipped with emergency lighting and clearly marked levels (so no one tries to re-enter on a floor that may be burning).
- Fire escape structures: sturdy and up to code requirements.





## 20 years “on the road!!

The Children’s Fire Safety House has brought a hands-on fire survival experience to over 40,700 children in third and fourth grade classrooms since it was launched in November 1992. Designed by architect Joe Hensley, sponsored by area Rotary Clubs and built by cooperative efforts with the Home Builders’ Association and the apprenticeship program at Spokane Community College, the Children’s House is dedicated to the memory of the four young Schliebe

brothers who lost their life in a West Central Spokane house fire in October 1995.

Look for the Children’s House this month at Lincoln Heights, Indian Trail, Finch, Assumption, Garfield, Trinity, St. Aloysius, and Willard Schools. When you see the two-story Children’s Fire Safety House traveling to the next school, remember to compare how your buildings line up with the curriculum:

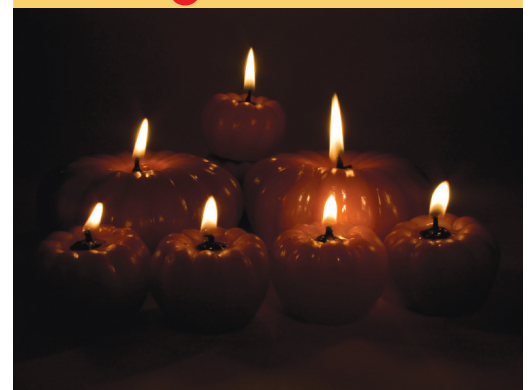
- Fire escape plan with **two ways out** of every room!
- Working photoelectric and ionization smoke detectors on every level of the home.
- Every member of the family knows how to escape to the meeting place in a fire situation because they have actually practiced the escape plan with a home fire drill!
- Precautions taken by following the “always” and “never” rules so that fires can’t start in the first place: e.g. never leave cooking unattended and always keep matches and lighters out of reach of young children.

## Enjoy a Fire-Safe Halloween

Halloween is a fun holiday for children but it is also a good time to teach them about fire safety.

The National Fire Protection Association created a Halloween Safety poster you can download for your tenants at [www.nfpa.org/assets/files/PDF/Public%20Education/HalloweenSafetyTips.pdf](http://www.nfpa.org/assets/files/PDF/Public%20Education/HalloweenSafetyTips.pdf) !

### Did you know?



Decorations are the first thing to ignite in more than **1,000** reported home fires each year.

You can sign up for this monthly newsletter, ask a fire-related question or suggest a specific safety topic by contacting Jan Doherty at [jdoherty@spokanefire.org](mailto:jdoherty@spokanefire.org) or by calling (509)625-7058.

Back issues of Apartment Safety Notes can be accessed at [www.spokanefire.org](http://www.spokanefire.org) under “Prevention”



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