

# National Fire Prevention Month October 2022

A Special Supplement to THE EXPOSITOR





# Volunteers are always needed

By Rachel Auberger

While the city of Sparta has six paid firefighters (one chief and five other firefighters), the majority of emergency work throughout White County is performed by volunteer firefighters.

White County has 10 fire departments, nine of which are run solely by volunteers, that respond to a variety of emergencies across the county's 376-plus square miles. While fighting fires is an important job, the fire departments also respond to medical emergencies, motor vehicle emergencies, lost persons, and a variety of other emergencies each year.

White County and the city of Sparta is served by over 100 volunteers who give hundreds of hours of their time each year to making sure that residents and visitors are safe. While there are over 100 volunteers, all the county's fire chiefs agree that more are needed. While fundraisers are held by each of the county's volunteer departments to help with costs, all of those

in charge agree that the most needed resource is people.

To become a volunteer firefighter, one needs to be 18 years of age and then reach out to the chief of the department with which they would like to work. All training can be done once a person has joined a fire department. Training includes 16 hours of Introduction to Emergency Services, 64 hours of Basic Firefighter Training, and 16 hours of Tennessee Fire Codes and Academy.

There are positions available for anyone who would like to be a volunteer and help with their fire department. While some may not be able to respond to fire calls or emergency work, auxiliary members can help by setting up command stations when there are large emergencies, keeping books and staff logs, organizing fundraisers, and building and truck maintenance.

To find out more about volunteering with your fire department, reach out to one of the county's 10 fire chiefs.

#### **BonDeCroit Volunteer Fire**

**Department:** 8023 Crossville Hwy., Sparta, TN 38583, (931) 935-3170

#### **Cassville Volunteer Fire**

**Department:** 227 Cassville Lane, Sparta, TN 38583, (931) 761-2476

#### **Central View Volunteer Fire**

**Department:** 14462 Old Kentucky Rd., Walling, TN 38587, (931) 761-7222

#### **Cherry Creek Volunteer Fire**

**Department:** 124 Montgomery Rd., Sparta, TN 38583, (931) 738-8511

#### **Doyle Volunteer Fire**

**Department:** 5220 McMinnville Highway, Doyle, TN 38559, (931) 657-2079

#### **Eastland Volunteer Fire**

**Department:** 221 Eastland Cemetery Rd. Sparta, TN 38583, (931) 935-8200

#### **Hickory Valley Volunteer Fire**

**Department:** 3680 Hickory Valley Rd., Sparta, TN 38583, (931) 738-3622

#### **Mt. Gilead Volunteer Fire**

**Department:** 2351 Sullivan Knowles Rd., Sparta, TN 38583, (931) 738-2106

#### **North End Volunteer Fire**

**Department:** 115 South Bunker Hill Rd., Sparta, TN 38583, (931) 761-3657

#### **Sparta Fire Department:**

715 N. Spring St., Sparta, TN 38583, (931) 738-7380

#### **Emergency Management Agency**

(931) 212-9849  
Matt McBride, director  
750 Airport Rd.  
Sparta, TN 38583

#### **911 Emergency Communications District**

931-738-8653  
Suzi Haston, director  
403 Mose Dr.  
Sparta, TN 38583



# National Fire Prevention Week, Oct. 9-15

By Rachel Auberger

Each year, the National Fire Protection Association sponsors Fire Prevention Week in an attempt to bring awareness about fire safety to communities across the country.

This year, the theme for Fire Prevention Week, which is officially Oct. 9-15, is "Fire won't wait. Plan Your escape," and the NFPA's goal is to educate everyone they can about simple, but important, actions that they can take to keep themselves, their families, their neighbors, and those around them safe from house fires.

According to the NFPA, today's homes burn faster than ever, and they estimate that you may have as little as two minutes to safely escape a house fire from the time the smoke alarm sounds. The ability to get out of a home during a fire emergency depends on two key factors: early warning signals from smoke alarms and advanced planning.

Smoke alarms sense smoke before you can, alerting you to danger. For complete home coverage, smoke alarms should be

in every bedroom, outside of the sleeping areas (like a hallway), and on each level (including the basement) of your home. However, it is not recommended to put smoke alarms in kitchens or bathrooms.

For the best protection, the NFPA suggests the use of combination smoke and carbon monoxide alarms that are interconnected throughout the home, so that when one sounds, they all sound. This ensures that you can hear the alarm no matter where you are in your home in comparison to where the smoke is coming from.

The NFPA says it is important to plan and practice a home fire escape so that everyone is prepared in advance and knows what to do when the smoke alarm sounds. Given that every home is different, every home fire escape plan will also be different, but all plans should include the best exit strategy, who is responsible for getting small children, older adults, or persons with disabilities, and a safe meeting place outside of the house.

To help with fire safety education, Sparta Fire Department is teaming up



sure that students are not just learning but understanding the importance of fire safety at home."

Young said in addition to meeting children at the elementary schools, Sparta Fire Department has also been visiting area daycare centers.

"We go and see the small kids at daycares. It's important for them to see what we look like in our turnout gear," Young said.

He also emphasized that seeing someone in heavy gear and masks could be scary to a child who was already in a stressful situation during an emergency.

"If they have a fire at their home and we have to make an entry, they will know what we look like and realize we are there to help them," he said.

While no one wants to be involved in a fire emergency, having a plan, knowing what to do and where to go will help everyone stay calm and bring about the best possible outcome when faced with the danger of fire. So, remember, "Fire won't wait. Plan your escape."

with elementary schools and having fire safety talks with students. According to Fire Chief Kirk Young, the department's continued fire prevention education program is making a difference.

"Since the start of Fire Prevention Education in the school system, our fire call volume has decreased," Young said. "Capt. Richard Taylor is our Public Education Officer, and he is doing a great job making



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# Escape planning for older adults



## FIRE PREVENTION



Plan for your abilities:

Making a home fire escape plan for yourself and/or the older adults in your household means making plans for your abilities and home environment:

- Remove clutter in the hallways, stairways, and near exits/windows for a clear, safe path out of your home.
- Keep your walker, scooter, cane, or wheelchair by your bed/where you sleep to make sure you can reach it quickly
- Keep your eyeglasses, mobile phone, and a flashlight by your bed/where you sleep to be able to reach them quickly in an emergency.
- If you cannot escape safely, keep your door shut, place a towel or blanket at the bottom of the door and stand near the window for fire service to reach you. Call 911 to let the fire department know you are inside the home.
- If you are deaf, hearing impaired, or have trouble hearing, install a bedside alert such as a bed shaker alarm that works with your smoke alarm to alert you of a fire. Strobe light alarms can be added to your smoke alarms for a visual alert.\

- For people who are visually impaired or blind, the sound of the smoke alarm can become disorienting in an emergency. Practice the escape plan with the sound of the alarm to become familiar with, and practice with the extra noise.
- When looking for an apartment or high-rise home, look for one with an automatic sprinkler system
- For people with cognitive disabilities, work with their healthcare providers and local fire department to make a plan that works for their needs.



*Thank you firefighters!*




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CHERRY CREEK VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT. Chris Brewington, chief



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CASSVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT. Teddy Stockton, chief

# Fire Prevention & Safety

BONDECROFT VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT. Ryan Edmonds, chief





**FIRE  
PREVENTION  
WEEK™**

# Fire won't wait. Plan your escape.™

## The \_\_\_\_\_ Family's Home Safety Action Plan

### **ACTION #1**

#### **Make the first Saturday of each month "Smoke Alarm Saturday"!**

A working smoke alarm will clue you in that there is a fire and you need to escape. Fire moves fast. You and your family could have only minutes to get out safely once the smoke alarm sounds.

- Smoke alarms should be installed in every sleeping room, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of the home, including the basement.
- Test all of your smoke alarms by pushing the test button. If it makes a loud beep, beep, beep sound, you know it's working. If there is no sound or the sound is low, it's time to replace the battery. If the smoke alarm is older than 10 years old, you need to replace the whole unit.
- If your smoke alarm makes a "chirp," that means it needs a new battery. Change the battery right away.
- Make sure everyone in the home knows the sound of the alarm and what to do when it sounds. (See ACTION #2.)



### **ACTION #2**

#### **Develop a home fire escape plan and practice it at least twice a year!**

Having a home fire escape plan will make sure everyone knows what to do when the smoke alarm sounds so they can get out safely.

- Draw a map of your home, marking two ways out of each room, including windows and doors.
- Children, older adults, and people with disabilities may need assistance to wake up and get out. Make sure they are part of the plan.
- Make sure all escape routes are clear and that doors and windows open easily.
- Pick an outside meeting place (something permanent like a neighbor's house, a light post, mailbox, or stop sign) that is a safe distance in front of your home where everyone can meet.
- Everyone in the home should know the fire department's emergency number and how to call once they are safely outside.
- Practice! Practice! Practice! Practice day and nighttime home fire drills. Share your home escape plans with overnight guests.

### **REMEMBER:**

#### **When You Hear a Beep, Get On Your Feet!**

Get out and stay out. Call **9-1-1** from your outside meeting place.

#### **Hear a Chirp, Make a Change!**

A chirping alarm needs attention. Replace the batteries or the entire alarm if it is older than 10 years old. If you don't remember how old it is, replace it.





Rich Thompson 2017

CENTRAL VIEW VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT. Matt McBride, chief



DOYLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT. Jason Sparks, chief



# Home Safety

## for People with Disabilities

There's no place like home. It is a place to relax, share laughs with family, and enjoy home cooked meals. But did you know that the majority of fire deaths occur in the home? Help everyone in the home stay safe from fire.



### Home Fire Sprinklers

Home fire sprinklers protect lives by keeping fires small. Sprinklers allow people more time to escape in a fire. When choosing an apartment or home, look for one that has home fire sprinklers.

### Smoke Alarms

- »»» Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room. They should also be outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home.
- »»» Test your smoke alarm at least once a month by pushing the test button. If you can't reach the alarm, ask for help.
- »»» For added safety, interconnect the smoke alarms. If one sounds, they all sound. This gives more time to escape.
- »»» Smoke alarms with sealed (long-life) batteries work for up to 10 years. They can be helpful for people who find it hard to change batteries.
- »»» Smoke alarms expire. Replace them every 10 years.

### People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- »»» Smoke alarms and alert devices are available for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- »»» Strobe lights flash when the smoke alarm sounds. The lights warn people of a possible fire.
- »»» When people who are deaf are asleep, a pillow or bed shaker can wake them so they can escape.
- »»» When people who are hard of hearing are asleep, a loud, mixed, low-pitched sound alert device can wake them. A pillow or bed shaker may be helpful. These devices are triggered by the sound of the smoke alarm.



### Escape Planning

**Include everyone** in home escape planning. Each person should have input about the best ways to escape. Home fire drills are important. Everyone in the home must participate in them. Keep a phone by your bed in case you can't escape and need to call for help.

### Talk with someone from the fire department

about your escape plan. Ask them **review your plan**. Ask if your fire department keeps a directory of people who may need extra help. If you have a **service animal**, agree on a plan to keep the animal with you during an emergency.



EASTLAND VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT. Bill Smith, chief

# Fire Prevention & Safety

HICKORY VALLEY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT. Tyler Brandes, chief



# Smoke Alarms at Home

**SMOKE ALARMS ARE A KEY PART** of a home fire escape plan. When there is a fire, smoke spreads fast. Working smoke alarms give you early warning so you can get outside quickly.

## SAFETY TIPS

- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom. They should also be outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. Install alarms in the basement.
- Large homes may need extra smoke alarms.
- It is best to use interconnected smoke alarms. When one smoke alarm sounds, they all sound.
- Test all smoke alarms at least once a month. Press the test button to be sure the alarm is working.
- Current alarms on the market employ different types of technology including multi-sensing, which could include smoke and carbon monoxide combined.
- Today's smoke alarms will be more technologically advanced to respond to a multitude of fire conditions, yet mitigate false alarms.
- A smoke alarm should be on the ceiling or high on a wall. Keep smoke alarms away from the kitchen to reduce false alarms. They should be at least 10 feet (3 meters) from the stove.
- People who are hard-of-hearing or deaf can use special alarms. These alarms have strobe lights and bed shakers.
- Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.



## FACTS

- ❗ A closed door may slow the spread of smoke, heat, and fire.
- ❗ Smoke alarms should be installed inside every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level. Smoke alarms should be connected so when one sounds, they all sound. Most homes do not have this level of protection.
- ❗ Roughly 3 out of 5 fire deaths happen in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.



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MT GILEAD VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT. Thomas Steele, chief

# Fire Prevention & Safety

NORTH END VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT. Andy McCulley, chief



# How to make a Home Fire Escape Plan

## 100 YEARS 1922-2022



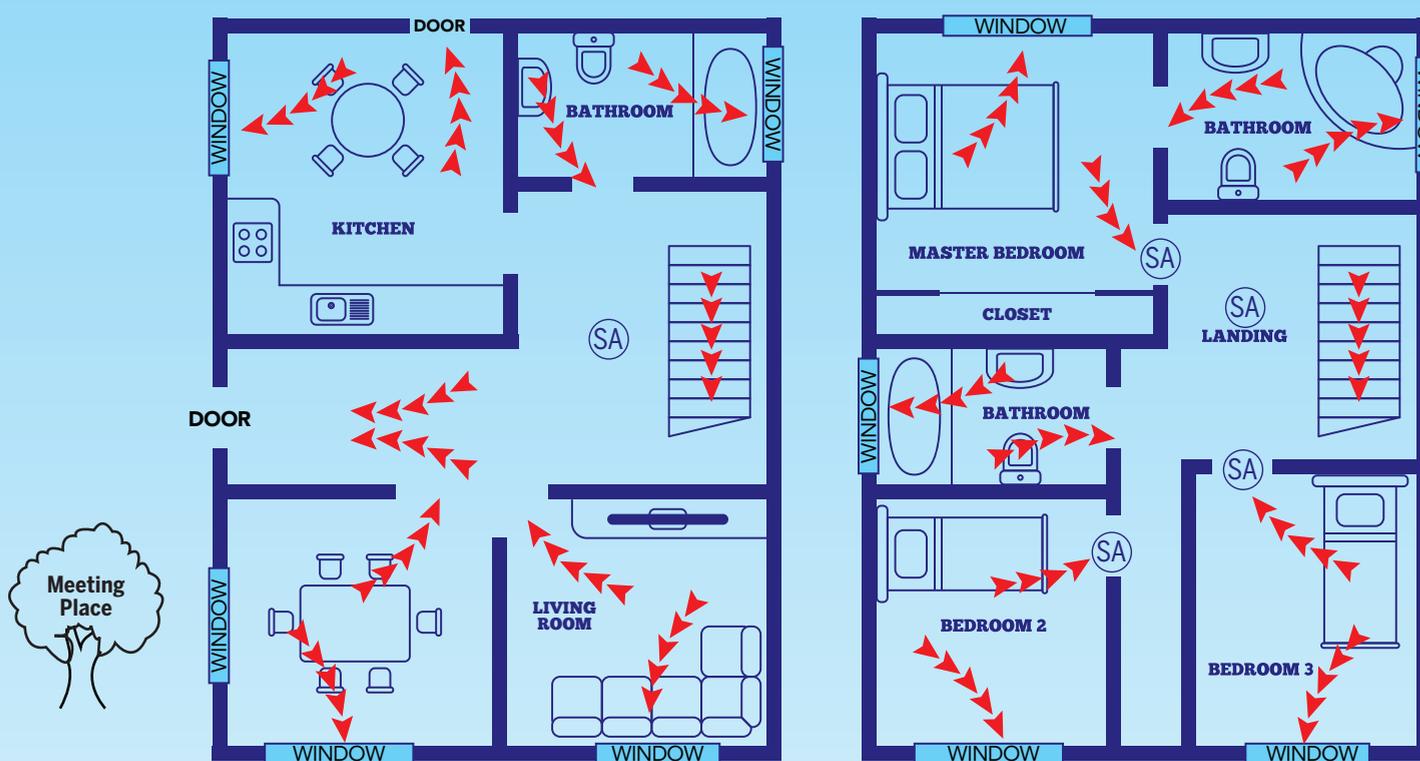
FIRE PREVENTION WEEK™



Visit [Sparky.org](http://Sparky.org) for more activities!

- Draw a map of your home. Show all doors and windows.
- Visit each room. Find two ways out.
- All windows and doors should open easily. You should be able to use them to get outside.
- Make sure your home has smoke alarms. Push the test button to make sure each alarm is working.
- Pick a meeting place outside. It should be in front of your home. Everyone will meet at the meeting place.
- Make sure your house or building number can be seen from the street.
- Talk about your plan with everyone in your home.
- Make sure everyone in your home knows how to dial 911 or your local emergency number.
- Practice your home fire drill!
- Make your own home fire escape plan using the grid provided on page 2.

### Sample Escape Plan



1st FLOOR

2nd FLOOR



Kids



SPARTA FIRE DEPARTMENT. Kirk Young, chief

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**EMERGENCY**  
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# Home Fire Sprinklers

Over 80% of fire deaths occur in the home. Home fire sprinklers can save lives and property from fire. They respond quickly and effectively to fire, often extinguishing the fire before the fire department arrives. Only the sprinkler closest to the fire will activate, spraying water on the fire.

## SAFETY TIPS

- »» Home fire sprinklers save lives and property. In many situations, a family who has survived a fire will also have their "home" to live in and enough of the items and space in their home to continue living their lives as they did before.
- »» The cost of a home fire sprinkler system in a new home averages \$1.35 per sprinklered square foot totaling an amount similar to what is spent for carpet upgrades, paving stone driveway or a whirlpool bath.  
Source: Fire Protection Research Foundation Study 2013.
- »» A home fire sprinkler system can reduce the homeowner's insurance premium.
- »» Fire departments typically use roughly 10 times as much water as a fire sprinkler would use to contain a fire.  
Source: Fire Protection Research Foundation Study 2010.
- »» Fire sprinklers are environmentally friendly. They can reduce the amount of water run-off and pollution, fire damage by up to 71%, and water usage to fight a home fire by as much as 91%.  
Source: FM Global and Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition Study 2010.
- »» Cigar smoke or burnt toast will not activate a fire sprinkler. Only the high temperature of a fire will activate the sprinkler.
- »» A home fire sprinkler system is easy to maintain. Just inspect your home to make sure the sprinklers are not blocked by something that would prevent the water from coming out such as paint and be sure the main control valve is never turned off.
- »» Home fire sprinklers are effective in cold and warm climates. Guidelines have been created for the proper installation of systems to avoid pipes freezing. A home fire sprinkler system should be winterized the same as you winterize a domestic water supply.

## And Don't Forget...

- ➔ If **MOVING** into an apartment or condominium building, make sure common areas and individual apartments are sprinklered.
- ➔ If **BUILDING** a new home or remodeling an existing home, consider installing a home fire sprinkler system.

## FACTS

- ❗ More than **2,500** people die in home fires each year.
- ❗ If a home fire occurs, the risk of dying decreases by about **80%** when the home is equipped with a fire sprinkler system.



Your Source for SAFETY Information

NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169

