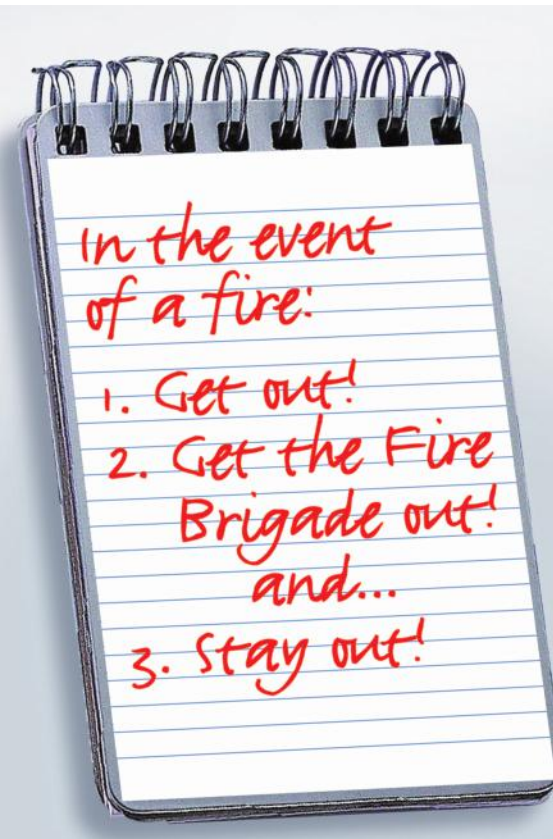
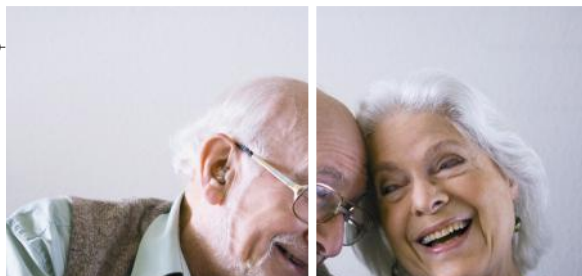
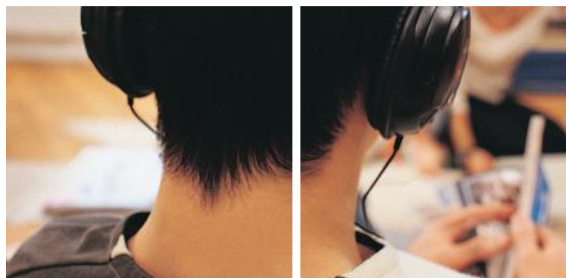
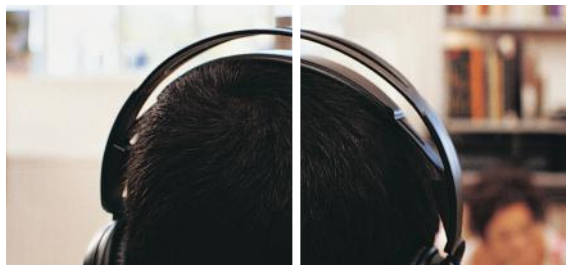




Comhshaol, Pobal agus Rialtas Áitiúil  
Environment, Community and Local Government



**fire safety**  
*Be on your guard*



For more information on fire safety  
Contact your local Fire Prevention Officer



National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management  
Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government  
Custom House  
Dublin 1.  
[www.environ.ie/en/LocalGovernment/FireSafety](http://www.environ.ie/en/LocalGovernment/FireSafety)

Fourth Edition 2011

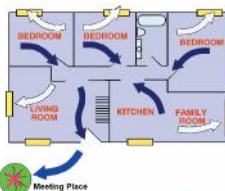
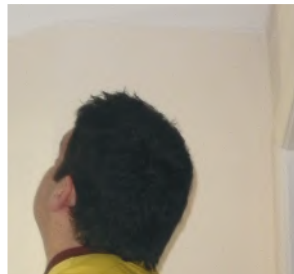
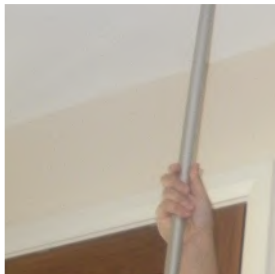
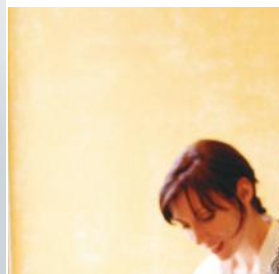
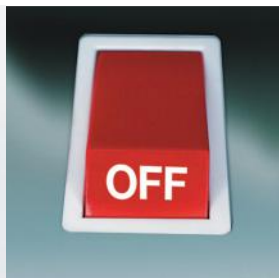


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**fire safety**  
*Be on your guard*

# Fire safety at home



**Fire Escape Plan**

**HE** Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

In emergency call **999** or **112**

**Don't delay, put into action today!**

**The four golden rules of fire safety at home**

**1**

**Fit working smoke alarms and test them regularly**

**2**

**Make a fire escape plan and practise it often**

**3**

**Check for fire dangers in your home and correct them**

**4**

**Carry out a 'last thing at night' routine**

# Fire safety at home

## 1

### Fit working smoke alarms and test them regularly

- **Fit smoke alarms today** and make sure they are in good working order. Working smoke alarms will warn you if there is a fire.  
**Remember: Your sense of smell does not work when you are asleep and smoke can put you in a deeper sleep.**
- **If someone in the home is deaf, or has impaired hearing**, they may not hear an audible warning from a smoke alarm, e.g. if not wearing a hearing aid at night. There are smoke alarm systems on the market that use strobe lights or vibrating pads to give alert of danger from fire. These offer improved warning for people who may have difficulty hearing a smoke alarm with audible warning.
- **Smoke alarms may be tested by pressing the test button with the handle tip of a floor brush.**
- **Replace the batteries** when they are not working and once a year in standard alarms, or as soon as you hear the warning beep.
- If you have 10 year smoke alarms, you need to **replace the whole alarm after 10 years.**
- **Get at least one smoke alarm for each floor in the home.** Fit them between the sleeping areas and the kitchen & living rooms – one in the hallway at ground floor, and one at each upper level, in the landing. For an enhanced level of protection, consideration may also be given to fitting alarms in living rooms and kitchen, in bedrooms used by vulnerable people, or in bedrooms where there is a television or large electrical appliance (such as a computer). (Heat alarms may be considered where fumes from cooking or smoke from cigarettes or open fires could lead to unwanted alarms.)
- **Position smoke alarms at ceiling level** in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
- **Vacuum the smoke alarms regularly** and wipe the cover. If they get clogged with dust they may not work properly.



In emergency call **999** or **112**

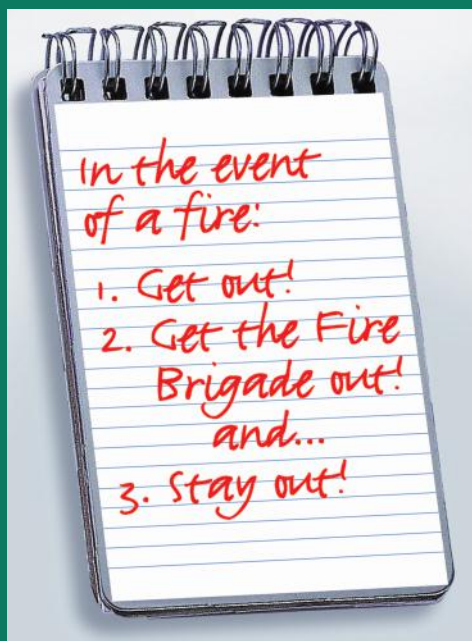
# 2

## Make a fire escape plan and practise it often

### Fire escape plan:

#### What you need to do if there's a fire

- **Keep your ways out/exits clear at all times**
- **Whether you discover the fire or your smoke alarm warns you, stay calm and put your fire escape plan into action.**
- **Raise the alarm.** Wake everyone up and get everyone out by the quickest way, assisting or collecting the very young or vulnerable in the household.
- **Check doors** with the back of your hand – don't open them if they are warm. This means the fire is on the other side. Only open the doors that you need to get out of the house.
- If there is smoke, **crawl along near to the floor** where the air will be cleaner.
- **Do not look for the cause of the fire.**
- Meet at an assembly point outside your home and make sure everyone is out.
- **Call the Fire Service at 999 or 112** from a call box, mobile phone or neighbour's house.
- **Do not go back in** until the Fire Service tells you it is safe.



# Fire safety at home

## 3

### Check for fire dangers in your home and correct them

#### Prevention is the best way to fight fire

- Check your home room by room for fire dangers and correct them.

Remember: most fires in the home start in the living room, bedroom and kitchen at night while we are sleeping.

#### • Kitchen

- Put a fire blanket and working fire extinguisher within easy reach in the kitchen and learn how to use them.

**When cooking**, always use the back rings first. Turn in saucepan handles and make sure they are not over other rings.

- Keep your cooker clean – grease is a fire risk.
- Turn off the cooker when you are not using it.
- Never use your cooker for drying clothes.
- Check the cooker is switched off properly before you go to bed.
- Clean or replace filters in the extractor fan regularly.
- Chip pans are a fire risk – consider using an alternative cooking method.





## In emergency call **999** or **112**

**Chip pans** are a fire risk – preferably, don't use them. If you use a chip pan, exercise extreme care.

- Never fill the chip pan more than one third full of oil or fat.
- Test the oil temperature by placing a small piece of bread in the pan. If it crisps quickly, it is ready.
- If the oil smokes then it is too hot. Turn the heat off and let it cool down before starting again.
- Never leave the room when the chip pan is on.
- Never move a hot chip pan.
- If using an electric deep fat fryer, empty it and store away when plugged out and completely cooled down.

**Electrical items** – use carefully and store them properly when you are not using them.

- Don't overload sockets. This is a major fire risk.
- Don't run electric cables across cookers.
- Switch off and plug out electrical items when you are not using them.
- If any electrical cables or plugs are damaged, worn or frayed, do not use the electrical item and call a qualified electrician.

### **Living room open fires**

- Place a proper fitting spark guard and fire guard in front of an open fire.
- Don't put anything on the fire guard.



# Fire safety at home

- Don't leave anything that can burn, like papers, magazines or clothes near a fire.
- Don't use an open fire to dry clothes. This is a major fire risk.

## Keep your chimney clean

- Get your chimney cleaned regularly – follow this guide:
- Wood burning fires: four times a year when you're using them.
- Solid fuel fires: once a year if using smokeless fuel.
- Solid fuel fires: twice a year if using coal.
- Oil fires: once a year.
- Gas fires: once a year, if they are the kind that needs sweeping.

## Portable heaters

- Use portable heaters with extreme care.
- Place heaters away from furniture, curtains and items that can burn.
- Don't move heaters when they are on.
- Switch off heaters and plug them out before you leave the house or go to bed.

## Candles

- Always place candles into proper holders.
- Do not put candles near items that may catch fire such as curtains, clothes or bedding.
- Never leave lit candles unattended.
- Place candles away from draughts.
- Don't move a lit candle.
- Make sure you put out all candles **properly** before you leave the house or go to bed.



# In emergency call **999** or **112**

## Smoking

- Don't ever smoke when you are feeling tired, especially when you are in bed or relaxing in a chair.
- Smoking is a real fire risk when you are tired and drowsy.

Remember: medication and alcohol can make you drowsy.

- Always use an ashtray when you smoke.
- Empty all ashtrays before you go to bed. Run the contents under the tap before you empty the ashtray to make sure they are properly extinguished.



## Bedroom

- Don't ever smoke in your bedroom.
- Keep a torch near your bed for emergency lighting.
- Bring your mobile phone to your bedroom for emergency use.
- Take extra care when using electrical items, such as mobile phone chargers and hair straighteners. Unplug them when you are finished using them and allow them to cool down completely before you put them away.

**Remember: never leave any electrical equipment such as mobile phones, mobile phone cables, hair straighteners, etc. plugged in or charging when you go to bed or go out.**

# Fire safety at home

## Electric Blanket

- Use electric blankets properly following the manufacturer's instructions.
- Check your electric blanket regularly for wear and damage.
- Store electric blankets rolled instead of folding them.
- Get your electric blanket checked regularly.

## How to recognise a dangerous electric blanket?

Replace your blanket if:

- the fabric or flex is worn or frayed
  - there are scorch marks anywhere
  - the tie-tapes (if it has them) are damaged or missing
  - any connections are loose
  - you are in any doubt!
- 
- **Repair** the plug or mains lead if it is damaged.
  - **Always turn off and unplug your electric blanket before you go to sleep.**

## Fire safety at home

# 4

### Carry out a 'last thing at night' routine

#### • Before you go to bed at night:

- Check your ways out /exits are clear before you go to bed.
- If your front and back doors need keys to open, ensure the keys are kept in a readily accessible place, known to everyone in the home, close to the doors.
- Make sure fires are well down and place spark guards in front of open fires.
- Do not leave your television, radio or music system on standby. Only appliances designed for 24 hour use should be left plugged in at night-time e.g. fridges, freezers, etc.
- Plug out the mobile phone charger when your mobile phone is charged or when you go out or when you go to bed.
- Switch off and plug out your electric blanket before you go to sleep.
- Empty ashtrays properly and put out candles, before you go to bed.



# In Emergency Dial 999 or 112

## Carbon Monoxide safety

### What is Carbon Monoxide (CO)

Carbon Monoxide (also known as CO) is a colourless, odourless poisonous gas. Approximately half of the deaths from unintentional CO poisonings result from the inhalation of smoke from fires. However, if there is a lack of air for the combustion process or a heating appliance is faulty, Carbon Monoxide can be produced.

**1. Signs of carbon monoxide:** The following indicators may be noted around the house and in rooms where there is a heating or cooking appliance:

- Staining, sooting or discolouration around the heating appliance and around vents.
- Condensation on walls and windows, and a strange smell when the appliance is on.
- A yellow or orange flame where normally blue for a gas appliance.
- Blockages in chimneys and flues.
- Any damage to or around appliances and flues.

**2. Regular servicing and maintenance:** The most common cause of carbon monoxide is from faulty or poorly maintained appliances and blocked vents, flues and chimneys. It is essential to service your oil and gas boilers annually using a Registered Installer. Ask your service technician to check all air vents, chimneys and flues to make sure they are clear of obstruction, both inside and out, and to increase fresh air circulation in rooms.

**3. Carbon Monoxide alarms:** The installation of Carbon Monoxide Alarms should be in line with the manufacturer's instructions for installation and positioning. CO alarms are a warning device and do not eliminate CO. Replace the CO alarm once it has reached its expiry date, detailed on the product by the manufacturer.

Further information on Carbon Monoxide safety can be found on [www.carbonmonoxide.ie](http://www.carbonmonoxide.ie) or Call: 1850 79 79 79.

Lines open: 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday. 9am to 5.30pm Saturday

Thank you for taking the time to read this booklet on fire safety at home.  
We hope it has raised your awareness on fire safety.

## Don't delay - act today!

Please use this information **now** to promote fire safety at home for you and your family.

# Fire safety checklist

You should be able to tick YES to each of the following safety statements.

If not, take action and tick the relevant box when you have.

If you are not sure what action to take, check the booklet.

Smoke alarms	Yes	No	Action Taken
1 There is at least one smoke alarm on every floor of my home.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 I test my smoke alarms once a week (or according to instructions) to make sure they are working at all times.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 I replace the batteries at least once a year (or according to instructions).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 I never disconnect the batteries.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 All family members know the sound of the smoke alarms/detectors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Fire escape plan	Yes	No	Action Taken
1 Our family has an escape plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 We practise our plan and know our ways out.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 The escape plan includes a safe place to meet outside the house where you can ensure everyone got out safely.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 We have at least two ways out from each part of our home.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No	Action Taken
5 All our family members know the EMERGENCY numbers 999 and 112.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Fire Dangers

	Yes	No	Action Taken
1 Our cooker and extractor fan are clean and free of grease.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 We turn cookers off when not in use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 We do not use our cooker to dry clothes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 We do not leave the room when our chip pan is on.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 We turn off and unplug electrical appliances when we are not using them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 We never overload electric sockets.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Our open fires have both spark and fire guards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 We never use an open fire to dry clothes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 We clean all our chimneys regularly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 We keep portable heaters away from things that can burn such as furniture, curtains and clothes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 We never leave lit candles in an empty room.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 No one in our home smokes in bed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 We check our electric blankets in our home for fraying, loose connections and damage.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Night routine

	Yes	No	Action Taken
1 We make sure the spark guards are in place on all open fires.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 We switch off and unplug electrical appliances before we go to bed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 We close all doors at night.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 We check out ways out and keep them clear at night.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 If our doors or windows need keys for opening, we check the keys are in a readily accessible place, known to everyone in the home, before we go to bed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>