

HAVE A FIRE EVACUATION PLAN FOR YOUR FAMILY

Most people think a fire could not happen to them. Yet house fires do happen. They are in the news almost weekly. We hear of fathers rushing back into a burning house to save a missing child just to find out the child was already out of the house and safe with a neighbor standing on the other side of the yard. (that just happened here in Seattle). If you have an evacuation plan, where all the family knows that if the house is on fire, you should meet at a certain place outside the home, that is much less likely to happen. When our children were small we taught them to meet at the mail box if the house was on fire. We practiced all going out there several times just to help them get it firmly into their mind where they should go. The American Red Cross gives the following advice:

http://www.redcross.org/services/prepare/0,1082,0_80_00.html#make

Make a plan

Meet with your family and discuss why you need to prepare for disaster. Explain the dangers of fire, severe weather and earthquakes to children. Plan to share responsibilities and work together as a team.

- Discuss the types of disasters that are most likely to happen. Explain what to do in each case.
- Pick two places to meet: 1. Right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, like a fire. 2. Outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home. Everyone must know the address and phone number.
- Ask an out-of-state friend to be your "family contact." After a disaster, it's often easier to call long distance. Other family members should call this person and tell them where they are. Everyone must know your contact's phone number.
- Discuss what to do in an evacuation. Plan how to take care of your pets.
- Write down all of these contact numbers and information on the family emergency contact card.

You can download their contact card from the Internet if you would like to have it:

<http://www.redcross.org/prepare/ECCard.pdf>

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