

FIRE SAFETY CHECKLIST FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS



In the United States, more than 4,000 people die each year in fires, and approximately 25,000 are injured. Special populations such as older adults, people with disabilities, the deaf and hard of hearing and the visually impaired can significantly increase their chances of surviving a fire by practicing proven fire safety precautions. The United States Fire Administration (USFA), a directorate of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), encourages individuals with special needs to use this fire safety checklist to help protect themselves and their home from fire. Personal responsibility is the key to fire safety...Fire Stops with You!

UNDERSTANDING THE RISK

Special populations are at risk for a number of reasons:

- Decreased mobility, health, sight, and hearing may limit a person's ability to take the quick action necessary to escape during a fire emergency.
- Depending on physical limitations, many of the actions an individual can take to protect themselves from the dangers of fire may require help from a caretaker, neighbor, or outside source.

HAVE A SOUND FIRE SAFETY AND ESCAPE PLAN

- It is vitally important to make and practice escape plans. In the event of a fire, remember, time is the biggest enemy and every second counts!
- Involve the assistance of a building manager, family member, or an entrusted friend when practicing your fire escape plan.
- Know at least two exits from every room.
- If you use a walker or wheelchair, check all exits to make sure they get through the doorways.
- Practice opening locked or barred doors and windows.
- When a fire occurs, do not waste any time saving property. Leave the home immediately. Once out, stay out.

INFORM OTHERS OF YOUR SPECIAL NEEDS

- Contact your local fire department on a nonemergency telephone number and explain your special needs.
- Your local fire department will be able to help you with your escape plan and may also be able to perform a home fire safety inspection, as well as offer suggestions about smoke alarm placement and maintenance. Ask emergency providers to keep your special needs information on file.

