

# FIRE SAFETY TIPS FOR THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED



Invest a few hours to  
pre-plan for a fire  
emergency

## Now that I'm in, how do I get out?

The most important step is to invest a few hours to pre-plan for a fire emergency.

Knowing what to do in case of fire may save your life!

Talk to family, friends, neighbours, and building supervisory staff

about your special needs in an emergency.

Markham Fire and Emergency Services can also help develop a plan that you can practice with those who you live and work with.



## HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF?

### Install smoke alarms

Ask the superintendent of your building, a friend or relative to install at least one smoke alarm on each level of your home, especially adjacent to bedrooms, to provide early warning of fire. Make sure your alarms are tested monthly and ensure the batteries are changed at least once a year.



### Remember 9-1-1

In case of fire, always attempt to get out, then call 9-1-1 and give your street address. If you can't get out, call 9-1-1 even if Markham Fire and Emergency Services has been called or is at the scene and tell them exactly where you are in the building. Don't panic. Stay calm.

## If possible, live near ground level

If you live in a multi-storey home, sleep on the first floor and keep a telephone by your bed. If you live in an apartment, consider living on the ground floor. Living closer to the ground and to an exit will make evacuation easier. Also, consider having doorways widened or ramps constructed.



## Plan and practice your escape

Know two ways out of every room, especially bedrooms. If one exit is a window, make sure that it opens easily. If you live in an apartment building and you are unable to use stairs, map out as many routes as possible. Never take elevators to escape fire. Elevators may become trapped between floors or they may take you directly to the fire location.

## IN CASE OF FIRE, WHAT MUST I DO?

### Get out and stay out

If you leave the building, leave as quickly and safely as possible. Never go back in. Never return for personal possessions, they are not worth your life. Call 9-1-1 from outside.

### Crawl low in smoke

If you are able, remember to crawl low while you exit and keep your head down. Hot, poisonous gases rise. The cleanest, coolest air is near the floor.



## Keep doors closed

A closed door will help slow the spread of fire, smoke and heat. If you hear your smoke alarm, smell smoke or suspect fire, feel the door. If the door feels cool, open it just a crack to check for smoke. If there is no smoke, leave by your planned escape route. If the door feels hot when you touch it, don't open it. Don't panic. Escape out the window or use your alternate exit.

## If you can't leave your room or apartment

Stay calm. Seal cracks around doors and vents as best as you can, using wet towels if possible. Open a window and stay low by it to breathe fresh air. If there is a phone in the room, call 9-1-1, tell them you are trapped and exactly where you are in the building. Shout for help or use a whistle and signal your position by waving a bright cloth, towel, sheet or flashlight.



## Stop, drop and roll

If your clothes catch fire, stop where you are. Drop to the ground. Roll over and over to put out the flames. Depending on your physical limitations, you may need someone's assistance to smother the fire. Don't try to put out the flames with your hands.

## Be alert to careless smoking

- Use large, deep ashtrays. Don't empty ashes into the garbage. Place contents in a metal container or toilet.
- Check upholstered furniture for dropped or hidden cigarette butts.
- Never smoke when you are in bed, feeling drowsy or while on medication.

# What are some of the ways that I can help prevent a fire?

## Be kitchen alert


- Never leave food cooking unattended on the stove.
- Avoid loose sleeves while cooking; loose clothing could catch fire.
- Keep pot handles turned toward the back of the stove.
- In case of a grease or pan fire, smother flames with a close-fitting pot lid or a larger pan and turn burner off.

## Cool a burn

Immediately apply cool running water to a burn for 5 to 10 minutes to reduce pain and avoid further skin damage. Don't use butter or salve since they may cause further damage. Seek immediate medical attention if blisters appear or if skin is charred.



## Check your appliances

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- Examine cords and plugs on your stove, oven, toaster, coffee maker and other cooking devices for signs of cracking or fraying.
  - Look for signs of overheating.
  - Check for a recognized testing laboratory label to show that the unit has been safely designed.

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In case of an emergency call Markham Fire & Emergency Services at 9-1-1

For more information, contact the Fire Prevention Division at (905) 415-7521, or visit our website at [www.city.markham.on.ca](http://www.city.markham.on.ca)

