



Home Fire Preparedness Campaign

Why is it important?

Home fires are the greatest disaster threat to American families. Seven people die *every day* from home fires. A fire-related injury is reported every 40 minutes. Annually, home fires cause 2,500 deaths and roughly \$7 billion in property damage.¹

What is our goal?

The Home Fire Preparedness Campaign aims to save lives, reduce injuries and build more resilient communities through raising awareness, facilitating preventative actions, and fostering community participation. *The national goal is a 25% reduction in home fire deaths and injuries in the next five years.*

How will we achieve it?

Working together in communities across the country, the Red Cross and partners are establishing local coalitions of fire departments, houses of worship, businesses, schools, social service agencies, neighborhood leaders and others to mobilize resources and volunteers in support of local home fire preparedness. Focused especially on supporting at-risk neighborhoods, coalitions will develop and carry out numerous activities over the course of the five year campaign, including three campaign cornerstone activities:

- Door-to-door installation of smoke alarms and completion of home-safety checklists and plans in vulnerable neighborhoods;
- Engagement of youth in classrooms and after school with technology, challenges and science-based education;
- A marketing and public relations campaign to motivate people to take action to save themselves, their families and their neighbors by checking smoke alarms and practicing evacuating when the alarm goes off.

How can we work together?

Take action in your home, in your community and across the country - here are a variety of ways to help:

- Join the Red Cross and other local organizations as part of a coalition committed to improving fire safety in your community.
- Sign on to volunteer with a coalition-planned home fire preparedness activity in your area, such as neighborhood canvassing, a smoke alarm installation rally or a youth-education activity.
- Connect with your local coalition to learn how you can help support preparedness in at-risk neighborhoods in your community.
- Take steps to become more prepared at home and help your neighbors do the same (*download the Team Red Cross App to learn how*).
- Donate to support national safety and preparedness efforts.

How can I learn more?

Contact your local Red Cross [707-577-7633](tel:707-577-7633)

Visit <http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/home-fire> or crystal.silva@redcross.org

Download the "Team Red Cross" app from your smartphone app store

¹ Ahrens, M. (2013). *Home structure fires*. Quincy, MA: National Fire Protection Association, Fire Analysis and Research Analysis.

Home Fire Preparedness Campaign Smoke Alarm Installation Event Overview

Campaign Purpose:

Seven times a day, someone dies in a home fire in the United States. Every 40 minutes, an injury from a fire is reported. Nearly 1,000 times every day, fire departments are called to home fires. Damage from US home fires is bigger than the entire annual sales of many Fortune 500 companies. For the past 20 years, these numbers have been relatively stagnant. By mobilizing the power of volunteers and the generosity of donors, the American Red Cross and our coalition partners will attack that stagnation. In an unprecedented, nationwide effort to combine new technology and innovation with old-fashioned neighbor-to-neighbor outreach, we will save lives, reduce injuries, and cut down on needless losses. Our goal is to reduce the number of fire deaths and injuries in the United States by 25% within five years, and we aim to achieve that goal by carrying out the activities listed below together with our partners.

Assembling a Coalition:

The Red Cross and our partners will achieve the goals of this campaign by establishing coalitions in communities all across America, bringing together local fire departments, houses of worship, businesses, schools, after-school groups, public health departments, social service agencies, neighborhood leaders and others. These coalitions will support all elements of the strategy by planning and carrying out joint activities, such as pre-event canvassing and smoke alarm installation rallies.

Pre-Event Canvassing:

Before going door-to-door to install smoke alarms, coalition volunteers will go through the targeted neighborhoods to inform people that this free service will be available in their neighborhood. This is called “pre-event canvassing.” By providing advance notification, we anticipate that more residents will be willing to let volunteers come into their homes and deliver the program services.

Smoke Alarm Installation Events:

One cornerstone of the campaign is going door to door where it counts the most. Data shows that the 4% of homes without smoke alarms represent nearly 40% of the home fires, and that working smoke alarms can double someone’s chance of surviving a fire. By combining historical data on fire incidents with demographic risk factors like poverty, maps will highlight the neighborhoods at greatest risk. The coalition will also be nimble and target areas dynamically in the event that there is an outbreak of fires in a neighborhood during the campaign. The goal is to install 500,000 smoke alarms each year.

In teams of three, volunteers will disperse into targeted neighborhoods to provide program services. On average volunteers will spend about 20 minutes completing each home visit.

Installation teams have three goals:

- Testing and (as needed) installing smoke alarms;
- Educating the resident on fire safety and safety from other types of locally relevant disasters; and
- Documenting resident information, including the services provided.

Education:

Disaster Safety Educators provide information regarding smoke alarms:

- Maintenance – *teaching the residents how to maintain their smoke alarms;*
- Testing – *teaching the residents how to test their alarms;*
- Silencing – *teaching the residents how to use the hush button feature to silence false alarms;*
- Replacement – *let the resident know smoke alarms don't work forever, and teach residents to replace all alarms every 10 years;* and
- Provide each resident with the manufacturer's smoke alarm maintenance and operation instructions.

In addition, educators also:

- Help the residents make a fire escape plan and ensure that residents know to “Get Out and Stay Out!” and then call 911 from their outside meeting location;
- Review a home fire safety checklist with the residents;
- Review preparedness and safety information for one additional hazard chosen by the local coalition; and
- Help residents plan on how to stay safe and reconnect with their loved ones when disasters occur.

Smoke Alarm Installation:

Smoke Alarm Installers are responsible for:

- Testing each smoke alarm in the resident's presence;
- Replacing batteries in alarms when needed;
- Ensuring that all homes have at least one working smoke alarm on each level of the home;
- Identifying where to install smoke alarms;
- Installing smoke alarms; and
- Testing new alarms in the resident's presence after installation is complete.

Reporting:

Reporters are responsible for:

- Ensuring the correct documentation (electronic and/or paper) is completed for each home visited;
- Keeping track of supplies;
- Keeping track of and reporting program metrics such as, the number of smoke alarms installed; and
- Ensuring the homeowner completes required documents (acknowledgement, releases, etc.).

Sustainability:

This campaign is a five-year initiative, which aims to reduce the number of fire deaths and injuries in the United States by 25%. Over time we will continue to expand local coalitions and increase the number of coalition members and partners engaged in Home Fire Preparedness Campaign activities. On a regular basis, ideas for improvement will be solicited, incorporated and shared with local coalitions to increase success. Home Fire Preparedness Campaign activities will be evaluated and continually improved over the course of the campaign. No one organization can tackle this issue alone, but together we can make a difference, save lives, and reduce injuries.