

100 YEARS

1922-2022



FIRE PREVENTION WEEK™



FIRE WON'T WAIT! PLAN YOUR ESCAPE.

In a fire, mere seconds can mean the difference between a safe escape and a tragedy. Fire safety education isn't just for school children. Teenagers, adults, and the elderly are also at risk in fires, making it important for every member of the community to take some time every October during Fire Prevention Week to make sure they understand how to stay safe in case of a fire.

Fire Prevention Week is observed each year during the week of October 9th in commemoration of the Great Chicago Fire, which began on October 8, 1871, and caused devastating damage. This horrific conflagration killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures, and burned more than 2,000 acres of land.

Fire is **FAST!** It only takes minutes for thick black smoke to fill your home. Fire is **DARK!** Fire starts brightly but quickly produces black smoke and complete darkness. Fire is **HOT!** Room temperature can rise to over 1000 degrees F at eye level. Smoke and toxic gases kill more people than flames do.

Have a home **fire escape plan** for everyone in your home. Some people may need help waking up or getting outside. Plan for your abilities. Knowing two ways out of every room is an important piece of your home fire escape plan. Have a clear path to your exits. Have an outside meeting place a safe distance from your home where everyone should meet. Call 9-1-1 or the fire department from outside your home.

Smoke alarms are a key part of a home fire rescue plan. When there is a fire, smoke spreads fast. Working smoke alarms give you early warning so you can get outside quickly. Install smoke alarms in every bedroom. They should also be outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. A smoke alarm should be on the ceiling or high on a wall. Keep smoke alarms away from the kitchen to reduce false alarms. They should be at least 10 feet (3 meters) from the stove. People who are hard-of-hearing or deaf can use special alarms that have strobe lights and bed shakers. Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.

CO (carbon monoxide) detectors are different than smoke alarms. CO is an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death if inhaled. When power outages occur during natural disasters and other emergencies, the use of alternative sources of fuel or electricity for heating or cooking can cause CO to build up in a home, garage, or camper and to poison the people and animals inside. CO is found in fumes produced by furnaces,

vehicles, generators, stoves, lanterns, gas ranges, or burning charcoal or wood. CO from these sources can build up in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces that are not well ventilated. People and animals in these spaces can be poisoned and can die from breathing CO.

When using a generator, use a battery-powered or battery backup CO detector in your home.

Never run a generator, pressure washer, or any gasoline-powered engine inside a basement, garage, or other enclosed structure, even if the doors or windows are open, unless the equipment is professionally installed and vented. Do not use a generator less than 20 feet from any window, door, or vent opening to your house. Use an extension cord that is more than 20 feet long to keep the generator at a safe distance from the home. Keep vents and flues free of debris. Flying debris can block ventilation lines.

If the power is out, use flashlights instead of candles. If you have to use candles, keep them away from anything that can catch fire. Always stay near lit candles, never go to sleep with lit candles.

Keep a **fire extinguisher** handy and make sure your family knows how to use it.

The Fire Marshal with the City of Punta Gorda Fire Department is highly recommending that **no open burning** be conducted at this time. This would mean any outdoor fires and open burning of debris or items needing disposed after Hurricane Ian. This would *exclude attended barbecue cooking equipment appliances*. There is a great deal of combustible material in and around our City which could ignite quickly. If anyone has any questions, they can contact the Fire Marshal for the City of Punta Gorda at 941-575-5529.

https://www.nfpa.org/fpw?gclid=EAlalQobChMlioLQj9vd-glVWsWGCh28fAOMEAAYASAAEgIXTfD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds

<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/be-safe-after.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/cofacts.html>