

SAFETY SENSE

Fire Safety At Home And On The Road

(NAPSA)—Most Americans say they are prepared for a fire emergency at home. However, a recent study found you may be more likely to encounter a fire away from your house than in it.

Work-related fires, fires experienced in transit and other away-from-home situations occur every day—and like home fires, the key to escaping these fires lies in preparedness. Fortunately, that's a lesson not lost on many people who endure such emergencies. Nearly half of women and 40 percent of men who have experienced a fire while traveling say they took precautions for the future.

So how do you prepare for fire emergencies—whether they're at home or away? "If you have a few tools and techniques in place that you can call upon in an emergency, you can not only save yourself, but others as well," says Dr. Melissa Riley, founder of the University of Mississippi Emergency Medical Responders. "Know where fire exits are at all times, have an emergency game plan and keep an easy-to-use smoke mask available whether you're at home, work or play." Here are Dr. Riley's top tips:

Prepare In Advance—Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in your home and be certain to change the batteries regularly (every year on your birthday, for instance). Also, consider keeping a fire extinguisher in your home. Be sure you know where the fire extinguishers are kept at your office as well.

Know Your Dangers—Smoke causes more than 75 percent of fire-related injuries, according to the United States Fire Administration—and it can kill a person in as little as 20 seconds. That's why experts suggest keeping a smoke mask handy. The masks let people protect themselves from smoke as they escape a fire and they can be a simple solution in a time of panic. For instance, the Xcaper Smoke Mask uses something called moist filter technology to absorb hazardous toxins

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and particulate matter common in house fires. It's designed with an all-natural moisturizing agent that allows for easy breathing and can be used when leaving a smoke-filled room. The mask is effective for 30 minutes or longer, depending on the conditions.

Know Your Exits—Be sure to have an exit strategy any time you enter a building. If you are at a theater or restaurant, take a few moments to notice where the fire exits are and if there is a back way out. If you're at work, participate in any fire drills offered. Of course, it's important to have an exit plan for your home as well.

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