

# Fire Safety - Are You Aware and Prepared?

**For all emergencies and fires call 911 first, then the gate house.**

## **Fire Safety Consults are offered by the fire departments**

Both Blue Ridge Fire & Rescue and the Green River Fire & Rescue have a "Fire Safety Consult" service available to homeowners free of charge. They will come to your home and discuss smoke alarm placement, life span and if you give them a cookie, or two, they will even change your smoke alarm batteries during this consult. They will also cover other safety issues within the home such as fire extinguishers, CO2 detectors, heat alarms for garages, lithium batteries or any other fire safety question you may have. You can schedule this service by **calling your primary Fire Dept, either Blue Ridge Fire & Rescue, ([828-692-4416](tel:828-692-4416)), or Green River Fire & Rescue, (828) 692-4009.**

## **Smart911**

Smart911 allows you to provide the additional details that 911 call takers may need to assist you during an emergency. When you dial 911 the information you provided is received by the 911 call center. Anytime you make an emergency call from a phone registered with your Safety Profile, the 911 system recognizes your phone number and automatically displays your profile on the screen of the call taker who receives your call. Your information is made available **ONLY** to 911 call takers and responders and **ONLY** in the event you call 911. For more information go to <https://www.smart911.com>.

## **American Red Cross**

Red Cross provides support to victims of fire. Your local fire department automatically calls Red Cross who in turn will contact your family. They will provide support in the form of financial, if needed, emergency housing and other items.

## **Evacuation/Disaster Preparedness List**

An Evacuation/Disaster Preparedness list was published in the October 2023 newsletter and is also on the [www.Kenmure.org](http://www.Kenmure.org) website. Click on the Emergency Management Committee (EMC) tab to view and/or print the list. Be prepared!

## **Home insurance**

If you haven't already done so, you may want to contact your insurance agent and discuss the coverage you have on your house and its contents. Due to building costs rising so dramatically in the past few years your annual increase in coverage may not be keeping up with those costs.

## Consider Getting a Knox Box

A Knox Box is a small, wall-mounted key vault that holds house keys for your designated fire department and emergency medical service. The Fire department and EMS holds master keys to all boxes in their response area so that they can quickly enter your home without having to force entry. The boxes should be mounted on the closest house entry to the street which could mean either your garage or your front door. These can only be purchased from Knox Box. According to both Blue Ridge Fire Chief, Will Sheehan and our Green River Fire Chief, Dustin Nicholson, they support and encourage the use of a Knox Box. For additional information and a one-time purchase (no subscription fees) go to the [KnoxBox.com](http://KnoxBox.com) website.

You may also **leave a house key at the gatehouse** to allow entry into your home in the event of an emergency; many residents have already done this. Be aware--Security will not use the key for anything else such as contractors, cleaning help, etc. This service is ***only*** for emergencies.

## Golf Cart Fire Safety Guidelines

1. Use only equipment, including batteries, approved for your golf cart.
2. Always ensure that you have a high-quality OEM charger that's programmed for your specific golf cart and its batteries, and follow the manufacturer's charging recommendations
3. Extension cord or power strip are not advisable for use when charging your golf cart.
4. Directly plug the charger into a grounded outlet on a dedicated 20amp circuit to ensure safety and proper charging.
5. Always buy lithium batteries from a trusted, reputable manufacturer and ensure a professional, reputable shop installs it. This guarantees that the installation meets safety standards.
6. Be sure to charge the golf cart batteries when someone is home – and preferably not overnight.

## Heat Alarms & Smoke Alarms

### Heat Alarms are advised over Smoke Alarms in Garages

1. Heat alarms are advisable for garages rather than smoke alarms. They respond only to high heat. Smoke alarms can sound an alert in response to smoke, but also can respond to fumes, humidity, dust particles and insects.
2. Purchase a heat alarm that is rated for temperatures between 175-200 degrees F. Alarms with lower temperature ratings may sound because temperatures in garages rise above 100 degrees F. Alarms with higher temperature ratings may sound too late to warn you of a fire.

### Basic Smoke Alarm Information

1. For placement of smoke alarms follow these guidelines.
  - a. If you mount alarms on the ceiling, place them 4 inches from the wall.
  - b. If your alarms are on the wall, they should be 4 to 12 inches from the ceiling.
  - c. Don't install alarms near windows, vents, or drafty areas
2. Install smoke alarms on every level of your home (including your basement and attic) and in each bedroom and hallway outside of sleeping areas.
3. Test each alarm monthly
4. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends using **brand-name** batteries in your detectors and change them every 6 months unless your alarm is a 10-year smoke alarm.
5. Replace your alarm after 10 years of the manufactured date. After about 10 years the alarm sensors can become less sensitive to smoke particles. To find the date of manufacture, take down the alarm and look on the back.
6. If you are replacing your smoke alarms, you may want to consider 10-year smoke alarms that have a built-in 10-year battery. These eliminate the need for battery replacements for the life of the detectors. You should still test your alarm monthly.
7. **If you have a wired system in your house you may want to consider having it professionally monitored such as with Southern Alarm Co. Hendersonville.**

## Carbon Monoxide Detectors

A carbon monoxide detector alerts you when a combustion appliance, such as gas heaters/furnaces, gas water heaters, etc. in your home emits dangerous carbon monoxide. The NFPA recommends that you install a carbon monoxide alarm on every level of your home, inside every bedroom, and outside each sleeping area.

## Lithium-ion batteries

Lithium-ion batteries can be found in cell phones, e-bikes, e-scooters, laptops, and golf carts to name a few. Fires caused by lithium-ion batteries do not respond to traditional fire extinguishers. Small lithium-ion batteries such as those in cell phones, contain very little lithium, so they can be doused with water. If you can safely cover a larger lithium-ion battery fire with a fire blanket to contain it and are comfortable doing so, go ahead, and then get to safety and call 911.

## Fire Extinguishers & Fire Blankets each have a Role in Fire Safety

1. **Fire Blankets** are fire-resistant sheets that are ideal for extinguishing **cooking fat fires** and can be used **to wrap around people** if their clothes catch on fire. If used properly they can cut off supply of oxygen to the fire. They're ideal to keep in the kitchen. However, they do have their limitations. They are most effective in small-scale fires and are not suited to large or intense flames.
2. **Fire Extinguishers:** It is essential to have alternative fire suppression methods on hand such as fire extinguishers as they can cover a larger area from a safe distance. For an all-around fire extinguisher, you may want to look at an ABC extinguisher. For a kitchen specific fire extinguisher, you should look for a Class K fire extinguisher.

### General Guidelines for Fire Extinguishers:

1. Make sure everyone in your house knows where the extinguishers are located.
2. Always keep them visible with the label facing outward.
3. Check frequently that the extinguishers aren't blocked and are easily accessible.
4. Consider keeping an inventory of your home's fire extinguishers to note when they were last inspected or serviced. Make sure they're always in working order.
5. The five essential places to keep a fire extinguisher in your home
  - a. **Kitchens** - Almost half of all residential fires are caused by cooking fires, making it one of the most frequent types of home fires.
  - b. **Near Sources of Heat** - One fifth of all home fires are caused by heating equipment. Whether it's your chimney and fireplace, a permanently installed room heater, or a pellet stove, be sure you know where the closest extinguisher is to each piece of heating equipment in your home.
  - c. **Each floor of your home** - Keep at least one fire extinguisher on every floor of your home, including the basement and attic,
  - d. **Garage** - Garages and workshops are typically full of combustible materials, especially things like gas canisters, oils, and cleaning products.
  - e. **Bedrooms** - Many fires happen at night, so every bedroom in your house should have easy access to a fire extinguisher.

# Create Your Fire Escape Plan

## Create a fire escape plan and practice it:

1. Everyone in your household should know two ways to escape from each room in your home.
2. Smoke is dangerous. Get low and go!
3. Decide where to meet once you get outside.
4. Get out and stay out. Never go back inside for people, pets or items.

## Links to a few Fire Safety & Prevention sites worth mentioning:

National Fire Prevention Organization (NFPA) <https://www.nfpa.org>

NFPA Fire Extinguisher Types <https://www.nfpa.org/news-blogs-and-articles/blogs/2023/08/01/fire-extinguisher-types>

Kidde – types of fire extinguishers and detectors, and preferred placements:

<https://www.kidde.com/home-safety/en/us/fire-safety/fire-extinguishers-for-home/#0>