

## HOUSE FIRES CAN BURN 8X FASTER RESEARCH SHOWS

Recent research by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, in concert with Underwriter's Laboratory, has confirmed that modern house fires burn much faster and pose more dangers than a few decades ago.

This research confirms the fact that occupants have much less time to safely exit the home involved in a fire, often less than a few minutes!

Fire moves faster than ever as a result of the furnishings, contents and construction materials in homes, which in many cases are much more volatile than they used to be!

In the past furniture was constructed using hardwoods but today that has been replaced by fast-burning non-hardwoods, including particle-board. Synthetic materials in home furnishings have now replaced the traditional wool stuffing. Highly combustible materials such as polyethylene foam mean that a fire can double in size every thirty seconds given the right fuel load and oxygen supply.

As a result of their research UL has determined that homes and their contents can burn 8X faster than houses constructed and furnished decades ago!

Properly placed working smoke alarms are the first line of defense in surviving a house fire. Early detection followed by being able to quickly exit the home are the pillars of surviving a house fire!

Wireless interconnect smoke alarms are a real advantage and a true lifesaver. These types of smoke alarms announce and sound throughout the entire home when just one is activated. In a scenario when smoke, heat and confusion rein these wireless alarms can actually give you and your family those extra few moments needed to safely get out.

Fire and smoke are indiscriminant and will not stop growing and consuming these new highly volatile materials until it is extinguished. Every second counts in a house fire, you need to immediately get out of the house. Below are some basics that need to be in place if you and your family are going to survive.

- Working smoke alarms must be positioned at the highest ceiling level throughout the home as smoke always follows the path of least resistance
- One smoke alarm on each level of the home – normally at the top of each interior stairway and in hallways adjacent to bedrooms is required by code
- New home construction require that smoke alarms also be installed in each bedroom
- It's also recommended that smoke alarms be added to garages, heater rooms, laundry rooms, attics and crawl spaces
- Test your smoke alarms monthly
- Take the time to sit as a family and discuss exactly what to do in the event of a house fire



# Upper Makefield *Township*

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- During your family discussion plan and discuss your best escape routes and everyone's role
- Practice as a family what you've discussed and planned
- Establish a central meeting point safely away from the home and once you are out safely **NEVER GO BACK INSIDE!**
- Meet the arriving fire and police officer to communicate if everyone is accountable for and the circumstances of the fire

In a house fire every second counts and with fires developing much faster than previously thought there is no room for hesitation. Prepare, plan, discuss, practice, and implement a program designed to insure your family's survival.

Should you have any questions please contact me at Upper Makefield Township by dialing 215-968-3340.

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