

Be Fire Smart: Tips for Travelers

If you are planning to stay in a hotel or motel, even for one night, take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with the premises and to locate escape routes in case an emergency should occur.

Knowing what to do in an emergency is crucial, especially if that emergency is a fire. Acting calmly and quickly may save your life. The following fire safety tips are a must for every traveler:

- § As soon as you check into a hotel or motel, go into the hallway and locate the nearest exits.
- § Count the number of doors from your room to the exit and memorize that number. Note which side of the hall the exit is on, or if you must turn left or right.
- § If a fire should occur, **do not panic**. Staying calm will increase your chances of survival.
- § Remember, smoke rises. It also kills. If you should awaken to smoke in your room, roll out of bed, grab your key and crawl to the door. Even if you can tolerate the smoke while standing, it is safer to crawl.
- § You should always place your key on your night stand before retiring so you won't have to waste time looking for it in an emergency.
- § When you reach the door, **do not open it** until you have checked to be sure there isn't fire on the other side. Brace your shoulder or foot against the door and open with extreme caution. Should you be confronted with a high concentration of super-heated air or smoke, close the door immediately.
- § If the hall is passable, use one of your pre-designated escape routes.
- § Do not waste time gathering personal belongings but shut your door and take your key.
- § Do not use an elevator. It may stall due to heat or loss of power.
- § If you must use an inside stairwell, check door for smoke on the other side before entering stairwell.
- § If the stairwell is safe to enter, WALK downward, do not run. Hold onto wall or handrail to prevent falling.
- § If all of your escape routes are blocked, it may be safer to return to your room.
- § If you must return to your room or remain in your room, because escape routes are blocked, open a window slightly to let smoke escape. If the window will not open, do not break it—a large hole can pull smoke into the room. If the smoke is outside, keep window closed. Do not jump. You may not survive the fall.
- § If you must remain in the room, close all vents and air ducts. Wet towels and sheets and stuff them around doors, and into vents and air ducts.
- § The extra few minutes that it takes to memorize these fire safety tips may save your life.

Source: Insurance Information Institute

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