



**American
Red Cross**



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News Release
NEWS RELEASE

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Local Red Cross Reminds Residents to Plan Ahead During Fire Prevention and Safety Week

October 6, 2008—The Inland Northwest Chapter of the American Red Cross is sponsoring a Fire Prevention and Safety Week/Day on October 6-12, and urges Inland Northwest residents to take a few simple steps to prevent home fires and help prepare their home and family in case a fire happens. Alarming, only 26 percent of families have actually developed and practiced a home fire escape plan, according to a recent poll conducted by Opinion Research Company (ORC) International for the American Red Cross.

“Last year the Inland Northwest Chapter responded to more than 115 home fires in Spokane” said Dawn Lindblom, Regional Executive Director. “Preparing for a home fire doesn’t require a lot of expensive equipment or training, and Fire Prevention and Safety Week is a great time to get started.”

“In addition to smoke alarms, one of the easiest ways you can prepare is to develop and practice a home fire escape plan so that every family member can escape quickly and safely,” continued Lindblom. “We suggest that a home fire escape plan include at least two escape routes for every room in the home, and a convenient meeting place at a safe distance from a fire.”

The American Red Cross offers the following recommendations regarding home fire prevention and safety:

- ✓ Remember that most home fires can be prevented.
- ✓ Keep anything that can catch on fire—pot holders, oven mitts, wooden utensils, paper or plastic bags, food packaging, and towels or curtains—away from your stovetop, oven or any appliance that generates heat.
- ✓ Keep all potential sources of fuel like paper, clothing, bedding or rugs at least three feet away from space heaters, stoves, or fireplaces.
- ✓ Portable heaters and fireplaces should never be left unattended. Turn off space heaters and make sure any embers in the fireplace are extinguished before going to bed or leaving home.
- ✓ Never use a cooking range or oven to heat your home.
- ✓ Never leave cooking food unattended, and avoid wearing loose clothing or dangling sleeves while cooking.
- ✓ Install a smoke alarm on every level of your home and outside of sleeping areas.
- ✓ Test smoke alarms once a month by pushing the test button and change batteries once year.
- ✓ Make sure everyone in your family knows at least two ways to escape from every room of your home.

The Red Cross depends on the generous support of Spokane residents to respond to our neighbors who are affected by home fires. You can help the Red Cross continue to help fire victims by making a financial donation to the Inland Northwest Chapter today at (509) 326-3330 ext. 217 or www.spokaneredcross.org

Governed by volunteers and supported by community donations, the American Red Cross is a nationwide network of nearly 1,000 chapters and Blood Services regions dedicated to saving lives and helping people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. Led by 1.2 million volunteers and 30,000 employees, the Red Cross annually mobilizes relief to families affected by more than 67,000 disasters, trains almost 12 million people in lifesaving skills and exchanges more than a million emergency messages for U.S. military service personnel and their families. The Red Cross is the largest supplier of blood and blood products to more than 3,000 hospitals across the nation and also assists victims of international disasters and conflicts at locations worldwide.

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