



SAINT JOHN

SAINT JOHN STORY SERIES

Saint John Story Series is a place to profile and highlight City of Saint John staff, service areas, and the positive impacts of City led initiatives within our community.

SJFD shares importance of planning, practicing home escape plan during Fire Prevention Week
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Once the smoke alarm sounds, you may only have two minutes or less to escape your home safely.

That's one of the messages the Saint John Fire Department is sharing during this year's annual Fire Prevention Week campaign, and why they say it's so important to have a fire escape plan in place and to practice it regularly.

"You used to have a little over three minutes from the time the fire started until you could safely evacuate through a smoke-filled situation," says SJFD Captain of Fire Prevention and Investigations Roy Nolan.

"Now, with the modern furniture we have today, that time has come down. So, people need to plan their escapes knowing that once a fire starts, depending on the type of smoke alarm a person has, you have very little time."



The theme of this year's national Fire Prevention Week is "fire won't wait, plan your escape."

Captain Nolan says no matter where you are – whether you're at home, visiting a friend, or at a place of business – you should be thinking about how to safely escape should a fire break out in that location.

"We always tell people to know at least two ways out of every room you're in," says Captain Nolan. "We want people to be aware of their surroundings no matter where they are. Ask questions, be alert, and know how to get out."



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One of the most important things you can do to help protect yourself and others from a fire is to install smoke alarms and check the batteries regularly to make sure they are working.

“When we go into apartment buildings and other places that we inspect, 70-80 per cent of smoke alarms are not working, which is very scary,” says Captain Nolan. “You’re dependent on that very early alert system, so it needs to be functioning.”

Another important thing you can do is sleep with your bedroom door closed because of the speed at which smoke and heat can spread through your home.

“Open doors are the worst enemy in a fire for people and for the firefighters. The more doors we can have closed the better off we’ll be at compartmentalizing the fire, and sometimes it will even put itself out,” says Captain Nolan.

“It’s so important to sleep with bedroom doors closed, to have working smoke alarms, and to have that fire escape plan in your mind so you and those you love can execute it and get outside. Once people get outside they need to stay out there. No material objects inside are as important as your life.”

For those who may have their bedrooms on a higher level, Captain Nolan suggests buying an emergency fire escape ladder that can be stored in the bedroom and used during an emergency.

For more information on Fire Prevention Week and fire prevention tips, click [HERE](#).