

# media release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service



## How to escape a house fire

Wednesday, 2 December 2009

In the lead up to Christmas, the Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) is reminding householders of key steps to take when dealing with a house fire, including what to do when calling '000'.

MFS Community Safety District Officer, Allan Foster says during a house fire emergency people can feel panicked and unprepared, sometimes making the wrong choices.

"Firstly I'd like to reinforce the importance of what to do when calling '000'. Callers are given an option to choose the most appropriate service to speak to; Police, Fire or Ambulance.

"During a house fire it's important that people choose to speak to 'Fire' authorities to report a house fire, to ensure the most immediate response from firefighters," District Officer Foster says.

If a house fire causes injuries or is linked to a crime, the MFS will alert the SA Ambulance Service and SA Police.

District Officer Foster says having a **Home Fire Escape Plan** can reduce panic, improve a person's or family's response to a house fire and increase the likelihood of survival.

- The first step of a Home Fire Escape Plan is to **install smoke alarms** and make sure they're regularly maintained and tested.
- The next step is to gather together as a household or family to **determine where the exits are in your home and how everyone would escape during a fire**. There should be more than one exit in every bedroom.
- The third step of a Home Fire Escape Plan is to **make sure everyone knows the key steps to surviving a fire**, including what the smoke alarm sounds like, how to crawl low under smoke and having an agreed, visible place to meet outside for a head count.

The MFS has encountered house fires where home security is so high, it has blocked or nearly blocked a person's escape, leading to deaths and injuries.

MFS Community Safety District Officer Allan Foster says, "It is vital that people know how to unlock doors and windows, they must leave keys in deadlocks when someone is at home and should have quick release catches on security doors and grilles.

"If people choose to have high levels of home security, then they must increase the number of interconnected smoke alarms, to give earlier warning of a fire," District Officer Foster says.

The MFS would like to reiterate that there is **NO CHARGE** made for attendance at fires.

**For media enquiries please telephone the MFS Media Line on (08) 8204 3770**

Members of the public should call the MFS Community Education Department on (08) 8204 3611 during business hours for further information. Country callers 1300 737 637.

[www.mfs.sa.gov.au](http://www.mfs.sa.gov.au)