

# DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

4516 Monarch Way, Norfolk, VA 23508

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## Fire Emergencies

### When a Fire Alarm is Activated

If a fire alarm is activated in your building, you should evacuate immediately.

- **REMAIN CALM.**
- Proceed to the nearest exit.
- Feel the top and bottom of the door with the back of your hand; if it's hot, **DO NOT** open it. Otherwise, open the door slowly, standing behind and to one side. Be prepared to close the door quickly if fire is present. If you feel heat, proceed to an alternate exit.
- Exit the building calmly using the stairs - **NEVER** use elevators. Close the stairwell door behind you.
- Stay low when moving through smoke and walk down to the ground floor to exit.
- After you have left the building, report to your building's designated emergency assembly area (EAA). If no designated area exists, remain a safe distance (50+ feet) from the building to allow for emergency vehicle and responder access.
- **DO NOT** return to the area until instructed to do so by emergency personnel.

### In Case of Fire, Be Prepared!

- Know primary and secondary evacuation routes from your building.
- Practice your escape plan: count the number of doors you need to pass through to reach the nearest exit. Heavy smoke may obscure exit signs and your vision in general; counting doors as you exit will help keep you oriented.

### During a Fire

- **REMAIN CALM.**
- If your building has a fire alarm system, activate it as you exit.
- Follow the procedures listed within your department's/building's Emergency Action Plan (EAP).
- Report to your buildings designated emergency assembly area (EAA). If no designated area exists, move to an open area away from other buildings, trees, power lines, and other obstructions.
- **CALL 757-683-4000 or 9-1-1** and report the location of the fire. Follow emergency responder instructions.
- For small fires (wastebasket-size), use a fire extinguisher **ONLY** if safe to do so.
- For larger fires, **LEAVE IMMEDIATELY** and close doors behind you to help contain the fire.
- If clothing catches fire, **STOP, DROP, and ROLL.**

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## If Trapped in a Room

- **REMAIN CALM.**
- Retreat and close as many doors between you and the fire as possible.
- Use available materials to seal cracks around the door. **CALL 757-683-4000 or 9-1-1** to report your location.
- Be prepared to signal from a window; **DO NOT** break the glass unless absolutely necessary to prevent outside smoke from being drawn in.
- Open the window a few inches for fresh air and have a brightly colored cloth or bed sheet from the window to indicate your location. Use a flashlight or mirror to signal at night.

## If Caught in Smoke

- **REMAIN CALM.**
- Crawl/Crouch low on your hands and knees to exit, watching the base of the wall as you go to stay oriented.
- Hold your breath as much as possible.
- Breathe shallowly through your nose whenever possible, using your shirt/blouse as a filter.

## If Forced to Move Through Flames

- **REMAIN CALM.**
- Hold your breath as much as possible.
- Move quickly, covering your head and hair.
- Keep your head down and close your eyes as much as possible.

## How to Use a Fire Extinguisher

Use the P-A-S-S method.

- **PULL** the safety pin from the handle.
- **AIM** the nozzle/cone/horn at the base of the fire.
- **SQUEEZE** the trigger handle.
- **SWEEP** the nozzle from side to side into the fire. Beware of re-flashing.