



Five ways to increase home fire safety



An average of seven Americans die each week as a result of house fires. Most fires occur in residential buildings between the hours of 11 p.m. and 7 a.m., when occupants are most likely to be asleep. Your first line of defense is fire preparedness.

Here are five things you can do to increase your chance of survival in a fire:

- Install smoke alarms on every story of your home and outside sleeping areas. Be sure to test them monthly, clean them every six months and replace batteries in spring and fall. Having working fire alarms can cut your chance of dying

in a fire in half!

- Have a fire escape plan for your family and practice it. A small fire can spread rapidly and you may only have minutes or seconds to escape. When going over the details of your escape plan, check windows and doors to ensure all open easily. Know your local emergency number (911). Never stop to gather belongings or reenter a home after safely outside.

- When renovating, consider using fire-rated, noncombustible products. Your choice of insulation, for example, can be vital. Stone wool insulation, like

that produced by Roxul, resists temperatures up to approximately 2,150 F. When directly exposed to fire, it will not off-gas, contribute to toxic smoke or promote flames. Fire-resistant building materials can give you extra time to escape when seconds count.

- Purchase a multi-use fire ladder for each bedroom in your home and practice using it. A fire ladder may be your only escape option if flames block critical exits.

- Place fire extinguishers on every level of your home, especially in high-risk areas like the kitchen, near

fireplaces and in the garage. Use only for small, contained fires that are not spreading rapidly. Know how to operate your extinguisher before an emergency occurs using the PASS method: Pull pin, Aim low, Squeeze lever and Sweep from side to side. The safest option is always to evacuate your home and call for help.

Fire prevention measures are a serious matter in every home. Find out how to keep your home and family safe at nfa.org or improve your fire safety knowledge by visiting the Roxul website.

Great Design Tips to Match Your Home's Architectural Style

(StatePoint) Adding the right design elements to your home can complete what its architecture hopes to accomplish. But knowing just what to incorporate to complement – rather than detract – from the style of your home can present a challenge.

For example, those who've embraced the recent resurgence of bungalows, Arts and Crafts-, Mission- and Prairie-style homes will want to ensure that they maintain the simplicity and warmth of their building's construction when making upgrades.

Luckily, many manufacturers offer home products to match a wide variety of styles. If you have such a home design and are looking to make improvements, here are some ideas to think about:

Materials

Maintain the rustic feel of your home without sacrificing modern performance by seeking out manmade products that mimic nature. Energy-efficient fiberglass entry doors have the look of real oak, while polymer shake roofing – which looks like real wood but is made of high-performance materials – will resist deterioration, fire spread and fading from the sun.

Get the look of wooden trim, shutters, louvers and balustrade systems with easy-care polyurethane products that require minimal upkeep, while resisting insects, decay and moisture. Brands like Fypon offer exterior accents, as well as textured millwork for the interior, such as easily-stained crown mouldings and baseboards.

Style

Give a nod to your low-pitched roof and open eaves with perfect exterior accompaniments. After all, these are some of the first elements that visitors see. Consider fiberglass entry doors from Therma-Tru Corp, which have embraced different architectural trends in its current offerings.

Designer glass accents in doorlites and sidelites provide contrast and warmth, enhancing the entryways of Craftsman-, Prairie-, Bungalow- and Arts and Crafts-style homes.

Likewise, consider adding silkscreened Mission and Prairie style windows, such as those from the Hy-Lite Home Designer Collection. They have the right architectural look and feel, yet still allow for light to filter through. Created from tempered privacy glass, they can match your home's architectural style while offering privacy.

Color

Relaxed and refined, Craftsman style homes offer a variety of opportunities to welcome color. While simplicity is the hallmark of this design style, that doesn't mean the colors have to be simple. Consider bright colors with contrasting white trim to add personality.

The roof offers a welcoming palette for starting "top down" color selections for the home. "Arts and Crafts style homes, as well as Bungalows, look great with the texture and color of a shake roof," says Kate Smith, chief color maven with Sensational Color.

Smith recommends a color palette that mimics nature, such as cedar, autumn or weathered gray hues from DaVinci Roofscapes, a brand that offers durable polymer roof products with the natural appearance of wood shake.

When it comes to home upgrades, the choices you make should not happen arbitrarily. Look for product offerings that will unite your home's design style and appeal.



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