

A fire can be particularly destructive on the farm. From property to lives, take a few steps to prevent it from happening to you.

Children, especially those younger than 5-years-old, are at the greatest risk of home fire-related death and injury. Young children don't know what to do and are likely to panic in a fire. They may hide in a closet or behind a bed instead of escaping.

Practice fire drills at home once a year. Show your children all of the safe ways to escape a fire from every room of the house and every building on the farm. Designate a meeting place outside and make it part of the drill.

One way to help prevent damage and injury is to install smoke detectors. There should be a smoke detector on every level and outside bedrooms.

Fire extinguishers are essential items on the farm in case a fire breaks out. Besides the house, keep fire extinguishers in barns, other farm buildings, and machinery including tractors and combines.

Ask the local fire department for a site visit of your farm. Outline potential hazards and note where safety equipment, like fire extinguishers, is located. Both you and the fire department will be better prepared if a fire should occur.

Take these precautions to help prevent a tragedy on your farm:

- ▶ Test smoke detectors once a month and replace the batteries twice a year (when you change your clocks for daylight savings)
- ▶ Replace smoke detectors that are ten years of age or older
- ▶ Place fire extinguishers in strategic, accessible locations
- ▶ Get training on how to use fire extinguishers
- ▶ Plan your escape routes
- ▶ Keep matches away from children
- ▶ Don't enter a structure if it catches on fire
- ▶ Designate a meeting place for family and employees
- ▶ Install lightening rods
- ▶ Store gasoline and other flammable fuels in proper containers in a cool place
- ▶ Turn off engines when refueling machines

Using a smoke detector may reduce your families' risk of dying in a fire by 50 percent.

