

TOWN OF VERNON

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For Fire Prevention Week, the Vernon Fire Department Urges Residents to Plan Their Escape from a Fire

This Year's Fire Prevention Week Theme is 'Fire won't wait. Plan your escape.'

(VERNON, Connecticut) – The Town of Vernon Fire Department and Fire Marshal's Office are teaming up with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to mark the 100th anniversary of Fire Prevention Week, which is October 9-15.

This year's campaign is "Fire won't wait. Plan your escape." The goal is to educate everyone about the simple but important actions they can take to keep themselves and those around them safe from home fires.

During Fire Prevention Week, Vernon Firefighters will go to Vernon elementary schools and day care facilities to speak with children about fire safety and what they should do in the event of a fire. They'll also acquaint students with the gear they wear so should they ever need help, they'll know the person wearing the heavy coat, mask and helmet is there to help them.

"Fire Prevention Week is an opportunity to think about fire safety and the important work our firefighters perform every day in our community," Vernon Mayor Dan Champagne said. "This year's theme, 'fire won't wait, plan your escape,' is a reminder of the importance of preparing a plan. I urge Vernon residents to plan for what they will do in the event of a fire. Plan escape routes and establish a place for family members to gather so everyone can be accounted for."

It does not take long for a fire to get going and to begin creating thick smoke that can make it hard to see and breathe, Vernon Fire Marshal Dan Wasilewski said.

"It's crucial for everyone to plan and practice what they'll do to escape a fire," Wasilewski said. "Everyone needs to be prepared in advance so that they know what to do when the smoke alarm sounds. Given that every home is different, every home fire escape plan will also be different. Have a plan for everyone in the

home. Children, older adults, and people with disabilities may need assistance to wake up and get out. Make sure someone will help them.”

And don't forget the critically important step of calling 911, Vernon Fire Chief Stephen Eppler said. The sooner firefighters are alerted to a fire, the sooner they can get there and begin to help, he said.

“Today, home fires burn and grow faster than ever,” Eppler said. “You may have less than two minutes to safely escape a home fire from the time the smoke alarm sounds. Your ability to get out of a home during a fire depends on early warning from smoke alarms and advance planning. Make sure smoke alarms are functioning and plan and practice what you will do.”

Here are some home fire escape planning tips:

- Make sure your plan meets the needs of all your family members, including those with sensory or physical disabilities.
- Smoke alarms should be installed inside every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of your home. Smoke alarms should be interconnected so when one sounds, they all sound.
- Know at least two ways out of every room, if possible. Make sure all doors and windows open easily.
- Have an outside meeting place a safe distance from your home where everyone should meet.
- Practice your home fire drill at least twice a year with everyone in the household, including guests. Practice at least once during the day and at night.

For more general information about Fire Prevention Week and fire prevention in general, visit fpw.org and sparky.org.

About the Town of Vernon

The Town of Vernon is a celebrated place to live, work and visit. From its beautiful parks and lakes, to its vast trails and historic homes and buildings, Vernon is a resilient and thriving community that promotes the health and wellbeing of its residents and values the natural environment. With a resident population of approximately 30,000 and occupying 18.03 square miles, Vernon combines a balanced appreciation of history, and a strong economic base for growth, both residential and commercial. Located 15 minutes east of the Connecticut capital of Hartford, and 25 miles from the City of Springfield, Massachusetts, the Town of Vernon is strategically located in “New England's Knowledge Corridor” with close proximity to some of the top colleges and universities in the country.

Designated a certified Sustainable Community, the Town of Vernon offers a wide range of benefits and services to its residents. The Town of Vernon is a full-service municipality that practices a management philosophy of continuous quality improvement. To learn more about the Town of Vernon, please call (860) 870- 3670 or visit www.vernon-ct.gov.

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