Every minute a fire burns it doubles in size. This rapid escalation means that early detection and prompt fire department response are critical to saving lives and property.

**Centrally Monitored Fire Alarm System**
These systems provide you and the local fire department early warning of a fire, 24 hours a day, even when a home is unoccupied. For further protection, include a backup cellular or radio device for signal continuity. Should your phone lines be compromised, signals will still reach the central station or police department. The absence of a monitored system could allow a fire to burn undetected, hampering the fire department’s ability to successfully suppress it.

**Minimum Suggestions**
- Place smoke detectors on each level of the home, including the basement, near bedrooms, and have at least one detector installed in every 1,000 square feet of the home.
- Use heat detectors in the furnace area, garage, attic and kitchen – wherever there is natural smoke. Smoke from cooking or dust from wood projects can set off smoke detectors resulting in false alarms.
- Have your system tested annually by the monitoring company to ensure effectiveness in the event of a fire.

**Prevention**
Take proper steps to prevent fires by cleaning:
- furnace filters – monthly
- kitchen range hood filters – semi-annually
- clothes dryer vents and chimneys – annually

**Family Safety**
- According to an NFPA survey only one of every three American families has a practiced fire escape plan. Take steps to create one, with a meeting place outside, and that is a safe distance from the home. Practice and teach it to children so that everyone can get out safely, day or night.
- Close all doors behind you and stay low to the ground.
- Stay outside; do not go back in the house for others.
- Call the fire department from your safe meeting spot.