



The biggest disaster threat to families across our nation every day isn't floods, hurricanes or tornadoes; **it's fire**. Last year, the American Red Cross responded to more than 63,000 fires. That's about 170 responses a day- one every eight minutes!

The Texas Panhandle Chapter responded to 68 home fires, last year in the 13 counties of the Northwest Panhandle providing food, shelter and support to 211 people trying to pick up the pieces. Statewide here in Texas, the Red Cross responded to 3344 fires.

- Home fires can strike quickly and without warning, devastating lives and property. But unlike other disasters, most home fires can be prevented.
- The Red Cross is committed to giving people the information they need to reduce their risk of home fires, and to helping people recover after a fire happens. At any time of day or night, trained Red Cross volunteers respond to the scene of fires and provide food, shelter, and emotional support to those affected.
- The Red Cross encourages people to remember two key fire safety steps to protect their home and loved ones from fires: Get a smoke alarm, and have a fire escape plan.
- Smoke alarms save lives. Sixty-five percent of home fire deaths happen in homes with no smoke alarms or with smoke alarms that don't work. Make sure you have a smoke alarm on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas. Test your smoke alarm once a month by pushing the test button, and replace the batteries at least once a year.
- Fires can spread throughout your home in minutes, so when every second counts, having a plan can help you escape. Home fire escape plans should include at least two ways to escape from every room of your home. Also, select a meeting spot at a safe distance from your home where family members can go after escaping. After discussing your plan with all members of your household, you should practice the plan twice a year.
- For more information on how to reduce your risk of home fires or to help your neighbors recover after a fire visit [www.redcross.org/homefires](http://www.redcross.org/homefires).
- You can help victims of disasters like home fires by getting trained as a Red Cross disaster responder. Red Cross disaster response volunteers specialize in functions ranging from damage assessment to public affairs to mental health counseling.
- All Red Cross disaster assistance is free to those in need, made possible by generous donations from people like you.

- You can help your neighbors recover from disasters like home fires by making a tax-deductible donation today. To make a financial donation please visit [www.amarillo.redcross.org](http://www.amarillo.redcross.org) or call 806-376-6309 or mail a check to the Texas Panhandle Chapter, American Red Cross at 1800 S. Harrison, Amarillo, TX 79102.