

NFFPA Fact Sheets

Security Bars

The metal bars that people put on their windows and doors for security can trap them inside during a fire.

Facts & Figures*

- Most of the fires involving security bars occur in low-income neighborhoods where people are already at higher risk for both crime and fires.
- Quick-release devices for security bars enable you to push the bars open. These can involve pulling a lever, pushing a button, stepping on a pedal or kicking in a lever on the floor.
- California has passed laws requiring that security bars used on escape windows be releasable and that all security bars be labeled with safety information. Mississippi and Texas have laws with varying requirements.
- Underwriters Laboratories has set standards for window-bar releasing systems.**
- A guide for community leaders and a brochure for consumers, titled "Safe and Secure," can be downloaded from the Public Education section of this Web site.

(*Source: NFFPA Center for High-Risk Outreach)

(**Underwriters Laboratories Inc.® Subject 2326 Research Bulletin Releasing Systems for Window Bars in Residential Occupancies)

Safety Tips

- Know two ways out of every room.
- Use emergency release devices on barred windows and doors.
- Make sure everyone in the household knows how to operate the release devices.
- Have working smoke alarms and test them monthly.
- Make an escape plan and practice fire drills in the home.