



Take time to make a toast to fire safety before ringing in the New Year

People around the world will celebrate the coming New Year with food, beverages, dancing and fireworks. Some will attend public events with hundreds of other revelers, while others will head to smaller gatherings or celebrations in private homes. Watch night services, a traditional late-night worship service, will draw those who want to reflect on the past year and prepare for the year ahead.

Whether the event is big or small, private or public, fire safety should be part of the planning. NFPA's [escape planning safety tips sheet](#) tells us that if a fire breaks out in the home, you may only have a few minutes to get out safely.

- Make a home escape plan. Draw a map of your home showing all doors and windows. Discuss it with everyone in your home, including guests.
- Know at least two ways out of every room.
- If the smoke alarm sounds, get out and stay out.
- Call the fire department from outside the home.

In addition to NFPA's [escape planning information](#), the [Safety in Places of Public Assembly tips sheet](#) provides information on how to prepare in case of an emergency in a public venue.

- Establish a communication plan with family or friends in case you get separated.
- When you enter the building, locate the exits immediately.
- Share any concerns about overcrowding, candles, pyrotechnics or other heat sources, and blocked paths or exit doors with management and leave immediately if you don't feel safe.

Making a toast to safety before the celebrating begins can provide a great start to a new year.