***Lodging***

**Motel/Lodging fire safety** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* ***Pre-departure:***
  + When selecting lodging, ask about fire-safety systems (smoke alarms, fire sprinklers, voice announcement system, trained staff) as well as security provisions\* and accessibility. Choose lodging that is protected by both smoke alarms and a fire-sprinkler system.
  + If lodging without smoke alarms must be used, consider bringing a portable smoke detector-alarm (optical/photoelectric type if traveling by air).
  + Request a room within reach of fire-department ladders (typically up to 7 floors above ground level).
  + Urge caution if cooking is allowed in rooms. Cooking equipment is the leading cause of hotel/motel fires. Forbid smoking in rooms.
* ***Upon arrival:***
  + When checking in, ask what the fire alarm sounds like, reiterate request for room on lower floor.
  + Designate an assembly point for your group in case of evacuation—usually a nearby building on the same side of the street if possible.
  + Upon entering your room, review posted escape plan. Find the nearest exits, count the number of doors between your room and the exits. Check that exits are unlocked and unblocked—if locked or blocked, report it to hotel management immediately—and if re-entry from stairway is possible. Locate fire-alarm pull stations and extinguishers near your room.
  + Keep room key, flashlight, clothes, and shoes readily accessible by your bedside.
* ***If fire alarm sounds:***
  + Grab key and flashlight, stay close to the floor. Use flashlight to see if there is smoke in the room. Crawl to door and feel it for heat. If door is not warm and there is no smoke in hallway, leave right away, bringing key and flashlight. Close all doors behind you. Use the stairs, never use elevators during a fire.
  + If you must escape through smoke, get low and crawl under the smoke to the exit.
  + If door is warm or hot or if corridor is so smoke filled that you cannot escape:
    - Shut off fans and air conditioners
    - Stuff wet towels in the cracks around the doors or seal with duct tape.
    - Call the fire department and inform them of your location.
    - Wait at the window and signal with flashlight or light-colored cloth (e.g., pillowcase).
  + If fire starts in your room, leave immediately, and close the room door behind you. Pull the nearest fire alarm and proceed to the nearest exit, as above.
  + Meet with rest of group at pre-designated assembly point. Conduct head count. Inform officials of missing persons.
  + Do not re-enter building until ‘all-clear’ is sounded by officials.
* References:
  + National Fire Protection Association (www.nfpa.org/education), National Safety Council (www.nsc.org)

\* Information on security conditions can be found on the U.S. Department of State website (<https://travel.state.gov> “Travel Advisories”), Overseas Security Advisory Council (<https://www.osac.gov/>), and other countries’ travel advisories, along with such travel-safety apps as Geosure Global (<https://geosureglobal.com/> ), Sitata (<https://www.sitata.com/en/> ), or TravWell from the U.S.A. CDC ([www.cdc.gov/mobile/mobileapp.html](http://www.cdc.gov/mobile/mobileapp.html) ).Other useful references include Manyak, M.J., J.M. Johnson, W.J. Young, 2014, Lizard bites and street riots: Travel emergencies and your health, safety, and security. WindRush Publishers, Dallas, Texas, USA, 298 p. ([www.LizardBites.com](http://www.LizardBites.com)).