



Notes from Patches and Friends



A Message from Patches and his Author; Fire Safety, Courage & Looking Out for Our Neighbors

Dear Friends It's Patches here!

If you've read my books, you know that I love exploring, meeting new friends, and helping Sam discover all the wonderful things around us. But today, my author and I want to talk about something much more serious—**fire safety**.

This is a very personal subject for us. Last year, my author, Gail L. Oxford's community experienced something frightening! A fire started close to her home when some men were burning trash without a permit on a very windy day. The fire spread quickly, and she had to evacuate. For a while, she didn't know what would happen.

Gail faced the possibility that she could lose her home—and so could many of her neighbors. In fact, they **came frighteningly close to losing almost all of their homes!**

But then something amazing happened.

The firefighters came and God sent His angels down from Heaven to help them!

They fought incredibly hard to protect the community and homes. And by God's grace, **every one of their homes were saved! It truly was an absolute miracle!**

Everyone said it was.

Gail will never forget the firefighters who put themselves in harm's way to protect her community. Their courage, dedication, and quick response made an enormous difference. Unfortunately, her reminder about fire danger didn't end there. Just last month, another fire started about **13 miles from her home after lightning struck. That fire burned thousands of acres.**

Two very different causes. One was caused by people making a dangerous choice on a windy day. The other was caused by nature.

Both are a reminder of just how quickly fire can change everything.

That is why we want to share some simple things families can practice together.



Fire-Safety Checklist

1. Know two ways out.

Walk through your home together and find two ways you could get out of every room, if possible.

2. Choose a meeting place.

Pick a safe spot outside where everyone will meet if you have to leave your home. Practice going there.

3. Listen to the grown-ups and emergency officials.

If firefighters or emergency officials tell you to evacuate, **go**. **Don't wait to see what happens.**

4. Never play with fire.

Matches, lighters, candles, and fires are tools for adults—not toys for children.

5. Talk about outdoor fires.

Before burning anything outdoors, adults need to know the local rules, permits, weather conditions, and fire restrictions. Wind can turn a small fire into a dangerous wildfire incredibly quickly.

6. Keep your eyes and ears open.

If you see smoke or fire, tell a trusted adult right away. Never go closer to investigate.

7. Practice your family evacuation plan.

A plan is much easier to remember when you've practiced it before an emergency happens.

8. If you are told to evacuate, take it seriously.

Grab your emergency supplies if you can do so safely, get in your vehicle or follow your family's evacuation plan, and leave when instructed.

Let's Practice Together

Here's something you can do with your family this week:

Have a **Family Fire-Safety Practice Day.**

Walk around your house and talk about

- Where are your exits?
- Where are your smoke alarms?
- Where would everyone meet outside?
- What would you take with you if you had to evacuate?
- Where would you go if your family couldn't stay home?
- Who would you call for help?
- Does everyone know what to do if they smell smoke or see a fire?
- And remember something very important:
Children should never be responsible for fighting a fire.

If there is a fire, get outside and get to safety. Tell a grown-up and call 911 when it is safe to do so.

A Little More About Sam and Me

My author recently published the **second book about Sam and me, and this time we arrived in Pagosa Springs to explore this wonderful little town!**

Sam and I love adventures. We love discovering new places, meeting people, and learning along the way.

But adventures also teach us something important: **being prepared helps us stay safe.**

I may be Sam's guide dog, but I think we can all be guides in our own way. We can look out for our families, our friends, our neighbors, and our communities.

The fires experienced have changed the way we think about fire safety. They have reminded us how precious our homes and our communities are—and how thankful we should be for the people who protect them.

So, from my author and me, please take a few minutes this week to make a fire-safety plan with your family.

Practice it.

Talk about it.

And thank a firefighter when you get the chance.

Because when the unexpected happens, **being prepared can make all the difference.**

Stay safe, keep exploring, and always look out for your pack!

With love,
Patches & Gail L. Oxford

PS. Don't forget to look for Sam and me in our newest adventure as we explore Pagosa Springs!

PurposefulPals.com

[Click Here to Download a Free Activity Page](#)

Patches' Fire-Safe Family Art Activity: Draw It, Practice It, Know It!

Patches says:

“Every good adventure starts with a plan! Let’s make a fire-safety plan together.”

Kids, it’s time to grab your crayons, colored pencils, or markers!

Draw Your Family’s Safe Escape Plan

Draw a picture of your home.

Then add:

Two ways out of your home.

- Use red arrows to show your escape routes.

Your family meeting place.

- Draw a big where everyone will meet outside.

The firefighters!

- Draw a fire truck, firefighters, or Patches helping everyone get to safety.

Your family.

- Draw everyone getting safely outside and meeting at your meeting place.

And don't forget Patches!

- Draw Patches making sure everyone stays together.
- Add Your Own Safety Rules

Finish these sentences:

If I see a fire, I will:

My family meeting place is:

A grown-up I can tell is:

One thing I learned about fire safety is:

Patches' Challenge

Now practice your plan with your family!

Ask a grown-up to help you:

1. Find two ways out of your home.
2. Choose a safe meeting place outside.
3. Walk through your escape plan together.
4. Practice getting outside quickly and safely.
5. Talk about what you should do if firefighters or emergency officials tell your family to evacuate.

Remember: You never need to fight a fire yourself. Your job is to get outside, get somewhere safe, and tell a grown-up.

Patches' Special Message

"Being brave doesn't mean you aren't scared. Sometimes being brave means knowing what to do when something scary happens.

So, let's practice together!"

Stay safe, little adventurers!

— Patches

Get in Touch

Patches and I would love to hear from you—maybe you have a question for Patches, a special message to share, or even a drawing of Patches in your favorite place!



And guess what? Patches and I are always dreaming about our next adventure. Where do you think we should go? Share your ideas, and maybe your adventure will be the one we take next!

Contact

Us

Click [HERE](#) to explore our previous newsletters and stay connected with everything happening in our community.