

Security Bars

Crime has become a major concern for many Americans. To protect ourselves and our families, many of us are installing security bars on windows and doors. Unfortunately the devices we use to keep us safe may actually be putting us in danger. Make you and your loved ones aware of what is safe.

SAFETY TIPS:

- If you **RENT** a place: Contact your landlord and ask him or her to replace the illegal bars with approved quick release bars.
- If you **OWN** a home: Replace any bars that don't have a quick release mechanism. Practice exit drills – your life and family's lives could depend on it.
- Options are handle or push button devices. Choose whatever suits your family's needs best.
- Quick release devices should easily be opened from the inside, **WITHOUT** the use of a key, detailed knowledge, or great physical effort.
- Be sure that windows are not stuck, screens can be taken out quickly and that security bars can be properly opened.
- Know and practice fire escape plans monthly, and use them to identify and correct obstructions of windows and doors needed for escape from a deadly fire.

FACTS AND FIGURES:

- A contractor or installer must provide warnings to the owner.
- Only bars with safety release mechanisms may be sold, distributed, or installed that have been tested by a State Fire Marshal approved laboratory.
- While the number of fire deaths in America is on the decline, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) notes the number of fire deaths related to improper security bars is on the rise.