

Smoke Alarms



SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES. 65% of home fire deaths happen with no smoke alarms at all or no smoke alarms that work. When there is a fire, smoke spreads fast and you need smoke alarms to give you time to get out.

Safety Tips

- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each separate sleeping area and on every level of the home, including the basement. Interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.
- An ionization smoke alarm is generally more responsive to flaming fires and a photoelectric smoke alarm is generally more responsive to smoldering fires. For the best protection, both types of alarms or a combination alarm (photoelectric and ionization) should be installed in homes.



- Test alarms at least monthly by pushing the test button.
- Smoke rises; install smoke alarms following manufacturer's instructions high on a wall or on a ceiling. Save manufacturer's instructions for testing and maintenance.
- Replace batteries in all smoke alarms at least once a year. If an alarm "chirps," warning the battery is low, replace battery right away.
- Replace all smoke alarms, including alarms that use ten year batteries and hard-wired alarms, when they are ten years old or sooner if they do not respond properly when tested.
- Be sure the smoke alarm has the label of a recognized testing laboratory.
- Alarms that are hard-wired (and include battery backup) must be installed by a qualified electrician.
- If cooking fumes or steam sets off nuisance alarms, replace the alarm with an alarm that has a "hush" button. A "hush button will reduce the alarm's sensitivity for a short period of time.
- An ionization alarm with a hush button or photoelectric alarm should be used if the alarm is within 20 feet of a cooking appliance.
- Smoke alarms that include a recordable voice announcement, in addition to the usual alarm sound may be helpful in waking children through the use of a familiar voice.
- Smoke alarms are available for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. These alarms use strobe lights. Vibration equipment can be added to these alarms.
- Smoke alarms are an important part of a home fire escape plan.

