

Change Your Clocks, Change Your Batteries in Your Smoke Alarms

Be Fire Safe – Protect Your Family

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including the basement, making sure that there is an alarm outside every separate sleeping area and inside each occupied bedroom.
- If you sleep with bedroom doors closed, have a qualified electrician install interconnected smoke alarms in each bedroom so that when one alarm sounds, they all sound.
- If you or someone in your home is deaf or hard of hearing, consider installing an alarm that combines flashing lights, vibration and/or sound.
- Mount smoke alarms high on walls or ceilings (remember, smoke rises). Ceiling mounted alarms should be installed at least four inches away from the nearest wall; wall-mounted alarms should be installed four to 12 inches away from the ceiling.
- Develop a fire escape plan and practice it at least twice a year with all members of your household. In the event of a fire, every family member should know at least two ways out of each room and where to meet once they are outside.
- If you are building a new home or remodeling your existing home, consider installing an automatic home fire sprinkler system. Sprinklers and smoke alarms together cut your risk of dying in a home fire 82 percent relative to having neither.
- Test your smoke alarms once a month, following the manufacturer's instructions.
- Change the batteries in your alarms at least once a year. A good way to remember when to change the batteries is to "Change your clock, change your battery," whether it's in the spring or fall.
- Never "borrow" a battery from a smoke alarm. Smoke alarms can not warn you of fire if their batteries are missing or have been disconnected.
- Keep smoke alarms clean. Dust and debris can interfere with smoke alarm operation so regularly vacuum over and around your smoke alarms.
- Do not disable smoke alarms even temporarily. If your smoke alarm is sounding "nuisance alarms," try relocating it farther from kitchens or bathrooms where cooking fumes and steam can cause the alarm to sound, or consider replacing it with a photoelectric smoke alarm.
- Consider installing smoke alarms with "long-life" batteries.
- Remember that smoke alarms should be replaced **every 10 years!**