

## Facts about Smoke Alarms

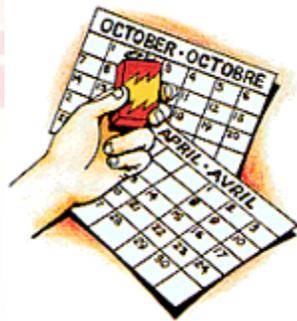
### Protect yourself and your family - Smoke alarms save lives:

Most fatal fires occur at night when people are asleep. Often, victims never wake up. A working smoke alarm will detect smoke and sound an alarm to alert you, giving you precious time to escape.

According to studies published by the National Fire Protection Association, having a smoke alarm cuts your risk of dying in a fire by nearly half. However, a smoke alarm should be part of an overall home fire safety strategy that also includes preventing fires by adopting fire safe behavior, and developing and practicing a home fire escape plan. In a fire, escape time may be very limited. Therefore, escape plans are a critical aspect of a home fire safety strategy.

### Do you know when to change the batteries in your smoke alarms?

#### Change your Clock, Change your Battery....



- To ensure your smoke alarms work when you need them, change your batteries at least once a year. We change our clocks each spring and fall so this is a good time to change your smoke alarm batteries too. It could save you and your family.
- Install a new battery of the proper type and never use rechargeable batteries.

### Buying the best alarm:

There are many types of smoke alarms, each with different features. Alarms can be electrically connected, battery powered or a combination of both. This combination - and a pause feature to reduce nuisance alarms - are highly recommended.

### One smoke alarm is not enough:

Install smoke alarms on every level of your home and near sleeping areas. If you or your loved ones sleep with bedroom doors closed, install an alarm inside each bedroom.

## **Where to install smoke alarms:**

Because smoke rises, you should place alarms on the ceiling. If you cannot do this, place them high up on a wall, according to manufacturer's instructions. There are certain locations to avoid such as near bathrooms, heating appliances, windows, or close to ceiling fans.

## **Test your smoke alarm regularly.**



Every month, test your smoke alarms, using the alarm test button. Follow your owner's manual.

- If the low battery warning beeps, replace the battery immediately. Only battery types recommended by the manufacturer should be used in a smoke alarm. Incorrect batteries may not provide the operating characteristics expected of the smoke alarm. Install a new battery of the proper type and never use rechargeable batteries.

## **Smoke alarms don't last forever. How often should a smoke alarm be replaced?**

As a rule of thumb, the Office of the Fire Marshal recommends replacing smoke alarms every 10 years or when it has exceeded the manufacturer's recommended life cycle.

## **Gently vacuum alarm every six months:**

- Dust can clog a smoke alarm, so carefully vacuum the inside of a battery powered unit using the soft bristle brush.
- If electrically connected, shut off the power and vacuum the outside vents only. Restore power and test unit when finished.

## **Plan your escape:**

Make sure that everyone knows the sound of the smoke alarm and what to do if a fire occurs. Regularly practice your home fire escape plan. Know two ways out of every room and have a pre-arranged meeting place outside. Once out, stay out and call the fire department from a neighbor's house.

***For additional information: Contact your local fire department.***