

Test Your Smoke Alarm

Testing smoke alarms may sound like basic advice, but this lesson can save lives. All too often the presence of a working smoke alarm can mean the difference between life and death. But despite the fact that smoke alarms are now widely popular, roughly 70% of home fire deaths result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.



Because fire can spread through a home so quickly, it is essential that everyone in your family be able to recognize the sound of the alarms and can get out safely. Smoke alarms can save your life, but they can't if they're not working. Test your smoke alarm today. It could make all the difference.

Smoke Alarm Tips

- Test your smoke alarms once a month, following the manufacturer's instructions.
- Replace the batteries in your smoke alarm once a year or as soon as the alarm chirps, warning that the battery is low. Schedule battery replacements for the same day you change your clocks back to standard time in the fall.
- Never "borrow" a battery from a smoke alarm. Smoke alarms can't warn you if their batteries are missing or have been disconnected.
- Don't disable smoke alarms even temporarily. If your smoke alarm is sounding nuisance alarms, try relocating it farther from kitchens or bathrooms, away from cooking fumes and steam.
- Regularly vacuuming or dusting your smoke alarms, following the manufacturer's instructions, can keep them working properly.
- Smoke alarms don't last forever. Replace yours once every 10 years. If you can't remember how old it is, it's probably time for a new one.
- Consider installing smoke alarms with long-life (10 year) batteries.
- Plan regular fire drills to ensure that everyone knows exactly what to do when the smoke alarm sounds. Hold a drill at night to make sure sleeping family members will awaken at the sound of the alarm. Some studies have shown that children may not awaken to the sound of the alarm. Know what your child will do before a fire occurs.