



Smoke Detectors:

Every home needs to be protected by smoke detectors. There are two things you need to make sure you do: 1- purchase, install and maintain smoke detectors in your home and 2- develop and practice a home escape plan with your family.

Smoke detectors need to be placed in more than just one location in your home to provide protection. The Fire Department recommends that for the best, maximum life saving protection, you should install smoke detectors in each bedroom, on every level of your home, and in every living area. The minimum protection for every home should include smoke detectors outside of each sleeping area and for homes with more than one floor, or a basement, a smoke detector should be placed on every level of your home (including the basement).

Sometimes you might have a smoke detector that always goes off when there is cooking smoke or when a member of your family takes a hot shower. These alarms can be a nuisance but can be taken care of without reducing protection for your family and home. 1- Replace the detector with one that has the silence feature. 2- Move the detector away to give smoke and steam a chance to disperse before reaching the detector. 3- If it is mounted on the ceiling, move it to the wall. 4- If the detector is the ionization type, replace it with a photoelectric detector. This type of detector is less sensitive to smaller particles which causes it to be less affected by cooking smoke or small amounts of steam. The unit packaging and/or owner's manual will indicate the type of detector.

Installing a smoke detector correctly and making sure it is correctly maintained are an important part of the protection provided by each device. Smoke detectors should be mounted in the middle of a ceiling, if possible. If they need to be mounted on a wall, place them at least 3 feet from any corner and 4-6 inches from the ceiling. Do not install smoke detectors near heating or cooling ducts and if you live in a mobile home, you should install smoke detectors on inside walls.

Just like making sure your car is maintained so it works when you need it, you need to make sure your smoke detectors are maintained and in working order so they are in optimum working condition—if you need them! You should test smoke detectors every month. For those hard to reach ceiling or high wall units, you can use a broom handle or stick to press the test button. The batteries need to be replaced twice a year. Daylight savings time is a good reminder to change the batteries. "Change your clock...change your batteries." And, by all means, if the low-battery signal begins to chirp, replace the battery immediately!

Smoke Detectors Save Lives!

Most home fire fatalities occur at night while people are sleeping. If a fire occurs in your home, your chances of survival are increased by 50% if smoke detectors are present and working.