



Smoke Detectors



SMOKE DETECTORS SAVE LIVES!

TEST YOUR DETECTOR EVERY MONTH

CHANGE YOUR CLOCKS - CHANGE YOUR BATTERIES

Choose your alarm...

- Be sure the smoke alarms you buy bear the label of an independent testing lab.
- Some alarms run on household current, with a battery backup, and may require professional installation.
- Some smoke alarms run on batteries; you can usually install this type yourself.
- Alarms powered by 10-year lithium power cells are ideal for anyone who would have difficulty changing batteries.
- Some alarms use an "ionization" type smoke sensing system; others use "photoelectric" sensors. Both types offer adequate protection if properly installed and maintained.
- Some alarms have "hush" buttons so you can briefly deactivate them if cooking fumes or steam set off a "nuisance alarm". These models reactivate automatically after eight (8) to ten (10) minutes.

How many do you need?

- Install smoke alarms on every floor of your home - and near or inside all sleeping areas. New construction requires smoke alarms in each bedroom.
- AFCI's (arc-fault circuit interrupters) are new devices that are now required for bedrooms in new construction. They detect abnormal arcing in a circuit which can cause overheating and lead to electrical fire.
- On floors without bedrooms, install alarms near the stairway leading to the floor above, in or near dens, living rooms, family rooms, and other living areas.
- NFPA also suggests installing alarms in dining rooms, utility rooms, and hallways.
- Don't install alarms in kitchens, bathrooms, or garages - where conditions might set off nuisance alarms routinely.

Be sure everyone sleeping in your home can hear your smoke alarms.

Where to install...

- Smoke rises. Mount alarms on a wall or the ceiling.
 - Wall mountings: Position the top of the alarm four (4) to twelve (12) inches (10 to 30 cm) from the ceiling.
 - Ceiling mounting: Position alarms at least four (4) inches (10 cm) away from the nearest wall.
 - In a room with a pitched ceiling: Mount the alarm at or near the ceiling's highest point.
- In open stairways (no doors at top or bottom): Mount alarms anywhere along the path smoke would travel up the stairs.
- In closed stairways (a door at either end): Mount alarms at the bottom of the stairway.
- Don't mount an alarm near a window, outside door, or forced-air register.

Never "borrow" a smoke alarm battery.

Installation...

- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Most battery-powered and plug-in alarms can be installed using only a drill and a screwdriver. Plug-in alarms must have a restraining device at the plug.
- Have a qualified electrician install alarms if they're hard-wired into your house wiring.
- Never connect a smoke alarm to a circuit that can be turned off from a wall switch or through the operation of a ground-fault circuit-interrupter.

NUISANCE ALARMS:

Try moving the alarm away from the source of the problem. Or buy an alarm with a "hush" button.

Maintenance...

- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Test all your alarms monthly or more often if recommended by the manufacturer's instructions.
- Install new batteries at least twice a year - when you set the clocks back in the fall or forward in the spring, for example - or when your alarm "chirps" to tell you the battery is low.
- Clean your alarms regularly, following manufacturer's instructions. Usually you can use a vacuum cleaner without removing the detector's cover.

Smoke alarms don't last forever. Replace any smoke alarm that is more than ten (10) years old.

Information provided courtesy of *Home Smoke Alarms*, National Fire Protection Association, Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02269-9101.