

SMOKE ALARM SAFETY

Smoke alarms (detectors) are essential to protecting the people in your home from home fires. No matter the cause of the fire or its location, properly functioning smoke alarms are there to help alert everyone to the presence of fire in time to evacuate safely. These life-saving devices are affordable, easily purchased and only require a few minutes of maintenance every 2-3 months.

Choosing a Smoke Detector

Look for smoke alarms listed with Underwriters Laboratories (UL). If a member of your household has difficulty hearing, it may be a good idea to consider purchasing a smoke detector that produces flashing lights or vibrations in addition to a loud noise to signal an emergency.

Where Should a Smoke Detector be Installed?

According to *The Hartford* (www.thehartford.com), approximately half of home fires occur between 11PM and 7AM, when most people are asleep. It follows that your bedroom is the first place to have a smoke alarm. Place smoke alarms outside each sleeping area in your home; inside any bedroom where the door is typically shut; and on every story of the house, including the basement. Follow installation instructions for the best protection.

How to Maintain Smoke Detector

1. Test units every 2-3 months.
2. Install new batteries immediately when the "low-battery" warning alarm sounds or at least once during the year.
3. Clean smoke alarms regularly by vacuuming them with a brush attachment.
4. Replace smoke alarms every 8-10 years to be assured of optimum performance.

Take a few minutes today to ensure your home has the appropriate number of smoke alarms and that they are properly located and regularly tested and maintained.