

Fall Into Fire Safety

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Do the smoke alarms in your home work? How about those of your family, friends neighbors? You may think they do. However, according to a recent study by the National Fire Protection Association, the smoke alarms didn't work in three out of every ten smoke alarm-equipped homes that had fires. That's a frightening statistic. Especially when you consider the fact that 80 percent of all U.S. fire deaths occur in the home.

Smoke Alarms

Why do I need smoke alarms in my home?

The risk of dying in a fire is twice as high in a home without a smoke alarm as in one with a smoke alarm. Most people who die in fires are not in the room where the fire starts. This is because the smoke created by a fire spreads from the fire to all areas of your home. Even a small fire can fill your home up with deadly smoke. Three-fourths of all fire-related deaths are from smoke inhalation, caused by the toxic gases produced as a fire develops and spreads. Most fire fatalities occur between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m., when most people are sleeping. Contrary to popular belief, the smell of smoke may not wake a sleeping person. Instead, the poisonous gases and smoke produced by a fire can numb the senses and put one into a deeper sleep. The only thing standing between the deadly fumes of a fire and a safe escape is the piercing sound of a smoke alarm. Smoke alarms are one of the best and cheapest safety features you can buy and install to protect yourself, your family and your home. Working smoke alarms let you know there is a fire in the home and give you time to escape.

Consider this:

- *Change your smoke alarm batteries when you reset your clock during daylight savings time - Change Your Clock, Change Your Battery!
- *If your alarms are more than 10 years old it's time to replace the whole alarm - not just the battery.
- *For the best protection, purchase alarms with 10 year lithium-ion batteries.

Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Approximately 250 people in the United States die each year from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. This deadly gas is hard to detect because it is odorless, colorless and tasteless. Take the following steps to help prevent carbon monoxide poisoning in your home.

Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Carbon monoxide is a by-product of combustion, present whenever fuel is burned. It is produced by common household appliances such as gas or oil furnaces, clothes dryers, water heaters, ovens and ranges. According to the American Medical Association, carbon monoxide is one of the leading causes of poisoning deaths in the U.S. Making sure furnaces and other potential carbon monoxide sources are properly vented and in good working condition, along with owning a UL listed carbon monoxide alarm, could become a matter of life and death.

Placement of Alarms

Proper placement of a carbon monoxide alarm is important. If you are installing only one carbon monoxide alarm, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) recommends it be located near the sleeping area, in order to wake you. Additional alarms - one on every level and in every bedroom of a home provide extra protection.

Homeowners should remember not to install carbon monoxide alarms directly above or beside fuel-burning appliances, as appliances may emit a small amount of carbon monoxide upon start-up. Alarms should not be placed within fifteen feet of heating or cooking appliances or in or near very humid areas such as bathrooms. Check with the manufacturer recommendations when installing your alarms.



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