

SMOKE ALARMS



Smoke alarms are your best defense!

Smoke alarms are an important part of a home fire escape plan.

- Smoke alarms should be installed in every bedroom. They should also be outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home, including the basement.
- Components of the alarms will deteriorate over time and can only be expected to work effectively within 10 years of their date of manufacture. Replace all smoke alarms that are older than 10 years.
- It is best to use interconnected smoke alarms. When one smoke alarm sounds, they all sound.
- Hard-wired smoke alarms should have battery back-up in case there is a power outage.
- Alarms that are hard-wired (and include battery backup) must be installed by a qualified electrician.
- Battery powered smoke alarms should be changed twice a year. A 10-year sealed battery is preferred.

Nationally, half of home fires happen when people are sleeping. In New Hampshire, most fatal fires take place between 11pm and 7am.

There are a couple of different types of smoke alarms.

Ionization – generally more responsive to flaming fires

Photoelectric – generally more responsive to smoldering fires

For the best protection, both types of alarms, or a combination should be installed in homes. Call your local fire department with specific questions.

If you live in a rental unit, the owner of the rental unit shall be responsible for maintaining the automatic fire warning device and carbon monoxide detection device in a suitable condition.*

Safety Tips.

- Test alarms monthly by pushing the test button.
- Smoke rises; install smoke alarms on a ceiling or high on a wall, following manufacturer's instructions.
- If an alarm "chirps," this is a warning that the battery is low and you should replace the battery right away.
- Be sure the smoke alarm has the label of a recognized testing laboratory such as Underwriters Laboratory (UL). https://ul.org
- If a smoke alarm does not respond properly when tested, replace the smoke alarm.
- If cooking fumes or steam set off nuisance alarms, replace the alarm with an alarm that has a "hush" button. A "hush" button will reduce the alarm's sensitivity for a short period of time. Photoelectric alarms tend to have fewer nuisance notifications.
- An ionization alarm with a hush button or a photoelectric alarm should be used if the alarm is within 20 feet of a cooking appliance.
- Smoke alarms that include a recorded voice announcement, in addition to the usual alarm sound, may be helpful in waking children through the use of a familiar voice.
- Special smoke alarms are available for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. These alarms use strobe lights. Vibration equipment can be added to these alarms.

Smoke alarms save lives!

Have smoke alarms in your home. If you do have an issue, these alarms will alert you and give you time to get out safely.

*NH RSA 153:10-a Automatic Fire Warning Devices and Carbon Monoxide Detection Devices in Dwellings

