Tooele City Fire Department

- Smoke Alarms -

Smoke alarms are devices that can save your life! They alert you when smoke is present in or around your home. When you are sleeping, they are your "nose at night" and can help you escape safely in the event of a fire.

Install and Test Smoke Alarms!

Although we like to feel safe at home, about two-thirds of our nation's fire deaths happen in the victim's own home. The home is where we are at the greatest risk and where we must take the most precautions. Most deaths occur from inhaling smoke or poisonous gases, not from the flames.

Smoke alarms are devices that are mounted on the wall or ceiling and automatically sound a warning when they sense smoke or other products of combustion. When people are warned early enough about a fire, they can escape before it spreads. Prices start at about $6 and up.

Installation:
- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including the basement (but not unfinished attics). Make sure there is an alarm in or near every sleeping area.
- Mount the smoke alarms high on ceilings or walls – remember, smoke rises. Ceiling mounted alarms should be installed at least four inches away from the nearest wall; wall-mounted alarms should be installed four to 12 inches away from the ceiling.
- Don't install smoke alarms near windows, outside doors, or ducts where drafts might interfere with their operation.

Maintenance:
- Test your smoke alarms at least once a month by using the alarms' "test button."
- Never use an open-flame device to test the alarm as you could burn yourself or start a fire.
- Replace the batteries in your smoke alarms once a year, or as soon as the alarm "chirps," warning that the battery is low. Helpful hint: schedule battery replacements for the same day every year, such as your birthday.
- Regularly vacuuming or dusting your smoke alarm following manufacturer's instructions can help keep it working properly.
- Replace your smoke alarms once every 10 years.
- Never "borrow" a battery from a smoke alarm.

- Make sure that everyone in your home can hear and recognize the sound of the alarm and knows how to react immediately.
- Don't paint your smoke alarms; paint or other decorations could keep them from working when you most need it.
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Types of Smoke Alarms
- Ionization - This is the most commonly available smoke alarm. This kind of technology detects fast burning, rapidly moving fires.
- Photoelectric - Many smoke alarms also contain this kind of technology. These sensors detect slow, smoldering fires.
- Dual-sensing - One alarm that contains both technologies of ionization and photoelectric.

REMEMBER BOTH KINDS OF FIRES CAN KILL YOU IF YOU DON'T ESCAPE IN TIME!

Most smoke alarms are battery operated. Many older alarms use 9 volt batteries. Even if a battery is hardwired in to the home's electrical system, a battery is usually included as a "backup" in case of power failure.

Some of the newer smoke alarms can use lithium batteries. While lithium batteries usually cost more, they last much longer - as much as five to seven years longer than a 9 volt battery.

Currently, there are smoke alarms available that use both ionization and photoelectric sensors. These "dual sensing" alarms offer better protection for your family. Several of the dual sensing models can also use long-life lithium batteries. Using a dual sensing smoke alarm with a lithium battery offers the safest protection for you and your family.

Where to install smoke alarms

It is recommended that every home have a smoke alarm outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home including basements.
- For the most protection, install a smoke alarm in each bedroom.
- Hallways longer than 30 feet should have a smoke alarm at each end.
- Install smoke alarms at the top of each stairwell.
- Smoke alarms in kitchens should be kept away from cooking fumes or smoking areas.
- Install smoke alarms on walls at least 12 inches from the ceiling.
- Smoke alarms can be installed on ceilings but be kept at least 18 inches away from dead air space near walls and corners.

Where smoke alarms should not be installed.
- Do not install smoke alarms near fireplaces and wood stoves. This will cause "false alarms".
- Drafts can affect how the smoke alarm works, so avoid installing near windows and doors.
- Never place a smoke alarm closer than three feet from an air register that could recirculate smoke.
- Do not install smoke alarms in laundry rooms or garages.
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Take care of your smoke alarms
- Vacuum your smoke alarms every month.
- Never paint your smoke alarms.
- Replace batteries when you hear a chirping, popping or beeping sound.
- Smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years.
- Check manufacturer's instructions when purchasing any smoke alarm.

Remember, when it comes to smoke alarms:

Get it! Purchase the correct number of smoke alarms you need for your home.

Check it! Check your smoke alarm every month to make sure the batteries are still working.

Change it! Replace the dead batteries with new ones to make sure your smoke alarm is in good working order and to ensure your family's safety.

Fire Facts:
- Missing or dead batteries are the main reasons smoke alarms do not sound in response to a fire.
- A home fire doubles in size every 30 seconds.
- After 10 years your smoke alarm has worked over 87,000 hours!
- A smoke alarm has a limited life - like any household appliance that works 24-hours a day.
- If you don't know exactly how old your smoke alarms are, you should replace them just to be safe.
- Once a house fire starts, you have less than 5 minutes to get you and your family to safety. Most deadly fires in America occur during the night, between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.
- The majority of victims of home fires die in their sleep.
- Your family's chances of surviving a home fire DOUBLE when there are working smoke alarms in the home.
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Each year, home fires kill more Americans than all natural disasters combined.

Additional Resources:

U.S. Fire Administration - https://www.usfa.fema.gov/

National Fire Protection Association - https://www.nfpa.org/