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# SMOKE ALARM FACTS

Your local Fire Marshal and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) would like to take this opportunity to encourage you to make sure that your smoke alarms are working, and to test them in accordance with manufacturer's instructions, at least once a month.

**If your smoke alarms are more than 10 years old, you should replace them.**

10  
years

Most homes have battery-powered smoke alarms that are not interconnected. Hard-wired smoke alarms with battery back-up are usually a better setup because their power source is more reliable, and when the alarms are interconnected, they can alert everyone in the home if fire strikes. The battery in both of these types of smoke alarms needs to be replaced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, typically at least once a year. Twice a year when you move your clock back or forward is a recommended practice. Another good option is to use the 10-year extended-life, lithium-battery operated smoke alarm.



## Tips for installing, testing and maintaining your smoke alarms:

- Choose a smoke alarm that bears the label of a recognized testing laboratory.
- Install smoke alarms on every level of the home and outside all sleeping areas.
- For added safety, install smoke alarms in every room where people sleep.
- To increase safety, have a qualified electrician install hard-wired, interconnected smoke alarms so that when one sounds, they all sound.
- Install a new battery in all smoke alarms at least once a year. Install a new battery immediately if an alarm “chirps” to indicate a low battery.
- Replace smoke alarms that use extended-life, lithium batteries when the alarm “chirps” or fails to respond to periodic testing. The batteries in these units cannot be replaced.
- Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.
- Test smoke alarms every month. Use the test button, or an approved smoke substitute, and clean the units, according to manufacturer's instructions. Do not use an open-flame device to test the alarm.
- Special smoke alarms are made for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. These alarms use strobe lights. Vibrating devices may also help in some cases.
- An ionization smoke alarm is generally more responsive to flaming fires and a photoelectric smoke alarm is generally more responsive to smoldering fires. For the best protection, both types of alarms, or a combination alarm (photoelectric and ionization), should be installed in homes.

Contact your local Fire Marshal at 817-276-4790 if you have any questions.

