

## Smoke Detector Tips

Installing and maintaining working smoke detectors in your house is a vital part of keeping your home fire safe. According to the National Fire Prevention Association, sixty-five percent of reported home fire deaths occurred in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms. In fact, an estimated 890 lives could be saved each year if all homes had working smoke alarms. Below are some safety tips on installing and maintaining your smoke detectors.

- Choose a smoke detector that has been certified by Underwriters Laboratories (UL).
- Test alarms once a month.
- Replace the batteries in your detector once a year or if the detector “chirps.”
- Install a minimum of one smoke detector outside every bedroom and in every sleeping area. If it is a two story house, install at least one per floor.
- If you have a person with a hearing disability living in your house, install a detector with a blinking alert light.
- Do not install detectors near vents, windows or places where a draft can reduce their effectiveness.
- Do not install in kitchens, bathrooms, laundry rooms or greasy areas, these are responsible for many nuisance alarms and the excessive dust or moisture can damage sensors.
- Dust alarms to remove debris or cobwebs two to three times per year. Use a duster or brush vacuum attachment.
- Smoke detectors have a shelf life of about ten years. After that they should be removed and replaced.
- Do not paint or decorate smoke alarms.
- Do not disable or remove the battery from the smoke alarm.
- Ceiling mounted detectors should be installed at least four inches away from the nearest wall.
- Wall-mounted alarms should be installed four to twelve inches away from the ceiling.