

# Smoke alarm maintenance

**Smoke alarms save lives...but only if they are installed and are in working order.**

## Installing smoke alarms

- ◆ Install at least one smoke alarm on every level of your home, including the basement. Make sure there is an alarm in or near every sleeping area. Follow manufacturer's instructions on installation and maintenance.

## Keep smoke alarms working properly

- ◆ 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 you change your clock from daylight to standard time in the fall.
- ◆ Regular vacuuming or dusting of your smoke alarm can help keep it working properly. Follow manufacturer's instructions for cleaning directions.
- ◆ Replace your smoke alarms once every 10 years.
- ◆ Never "borrow" a battery from a smoke alarm for another appliance.
- ◆ Make sure everyone in your home can hear and recognize the sound of the alarm and knows how to react immediately.
- ◆ When testing your alarm you are checking two things. You want to ensure that power is being transmitted to the alarm, and that it will activate in the presence of smoke.
- ◆ Even the types of alarms that have a pilot light to indicate power is being transmitted should be tested regularly.
- ◆ When you've been away from home for a few days, check your alarm when you return to make sure it is functioning.

## How to test your alarm

- ◆ Test your smoke alarms monthly with smoke. Models that have a test button also need to be tested monthly with smoke because the test button may only tell you that the buzzer works, and not necessarily that the smoke-sensing mechanism is functioning.
  - ◆ Drift smoke from a just extinguished candle.
  - ◆ Alarm should sound within 20 seconds.
  - ◆ Fan smoke away to silence alarm.

## If your alarm does not sound

### Possible Causes

### Action

battery dead..... replace immediately

no electricity.....check fuse box/breaker panel or contact an electrician

smoke alarm dead.....replace immediately

**For more information, please call (780) 427-8392 or visit [www.gov.ab.ca/ma/fco](http://www.gov.ab.ca/ma/fco).**