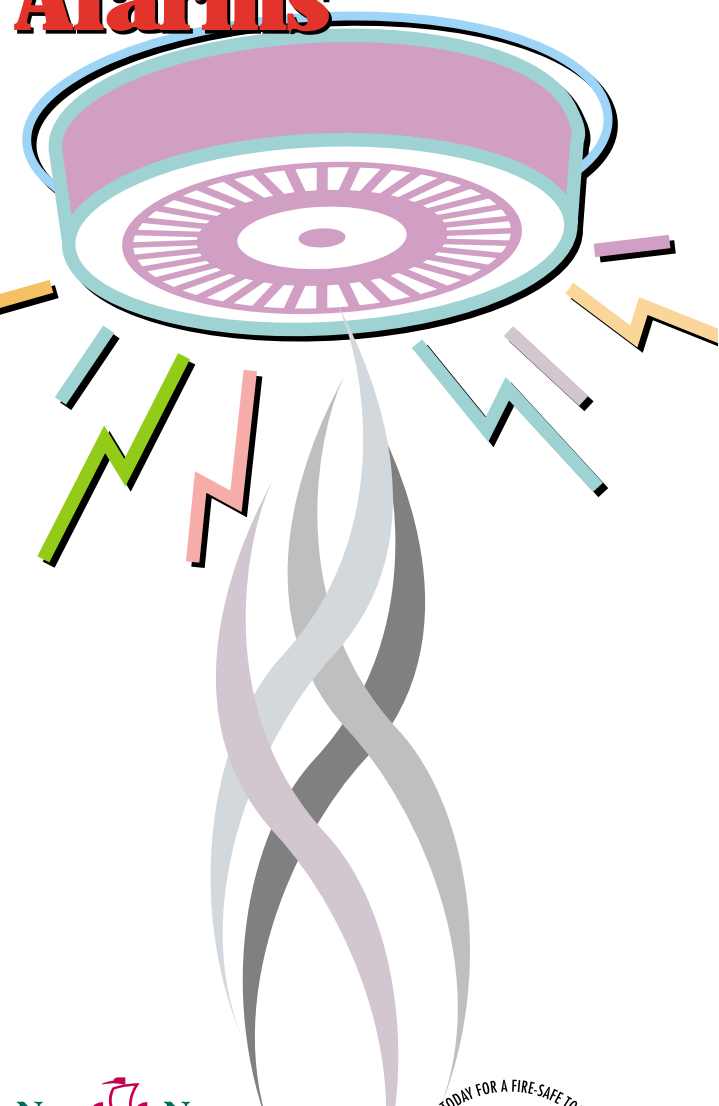


Smoke Alarms



Deaths due to house fires happen at night, while people are sleeping. Victims may never wake up because of the poisonous effects of gas and smoke created by the blaze. Smoke alarms will protect you from these silent killers if they are properly installed and maintained.

Where should you put your smoke alarms?

- Outside every sleeping area and on every level of the home. Don't forget to install a detector at the bottom of the basement stairs.
- If you sleep with the bedroom door closed, install a smoke alarm inside the bedroom.
- For extra protection, install alarms in the dining room, living room, utility room and in hallways.
- Install smoke alarms on the ceiling about 15 centimetres (six inches) from the wall. **Smoke alarms installed in all other stairwells should be placed directly above the top step.**

Can you hear your smoke alarm at night?

It is a good idea to test your smoke alarms while the family is sleeping. One test will verify if they will hear the alarm, and escape from a fire in time.

Choosing a smoke alarm

Smoke alarms either run on batteries, or are wired directly into your home's electrical system. You can easily install battery-powered smoke alarms following the manufacturer's instructions. A qualified electrician should install units that use your home's electrical system. These alarms must be used with a battery as backup in case of power outages. No matter which model you select, carefully follow the manufacturer's instructions on testing and maintenance.

Different smoke alarms for different types of fire!

Not all fires are the same. A flaming fire devours combustibles quickly, spreads rapidly and generates considerable heat with little smoke.

Ionization smoke alarms respond first to fast flaming fires.

A smouldering fire generates large amounts of thick, black smoke with little heat and may smoulder for hours before bursting into flames.

Photoelectronic smoke alarms respond first to slow smouldering fires and are less prone to nuisance alarms in the kitchen area.

Check your smoke alarm regularly!

Test your smoke alarms every month. Do this by pressing and holding the test button for a few seconds. The alarm should sound immediately. Replace models that do not have test buttons or that are more than 10 years old.

Change the battery in your smoke alarm at least once a year, more often if necessary. A good reminder is – **Change your clock – Change your battery!**

Don't be a battery bandit – never remove the battery from a smoke alarm for another use!

Beeping smoke alarms may need cleaning. Clean your smoke alarms twice a year by removing the cover and carefully wiping it with a damp cloth. Gently vacuum the sensor unit inside.

Replace the cover and test the smoke alarm to make sure it is working properly. If it doesn't stop beeping, replace the unit.

Plan and practice an escape route in case of fire!

The shrill whine of a smoke alarm can be frightening, especially in the middle of the night. To avoid the panic and confusion caused by fear – plan and practise a fire escape route with your family. Choose two exits from every room. Once you escape, stay out of the building! Choose a safe place to gather in case of fire. Call the fire department from a neighbour's house.

Protect the people you love and the belongings you cherish! Install and maintain smoke alarms and plan and practise a fire escape plan!

