

Smoke Alarms



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Smoke alarms provide an early warning of fire, giving you and your family more time to safely evacuate your home.

Choosing a Smoke Alarm

- Smoke alarms can be purchased at the majority of hardware and variety department stores. Be sure that they alarms you buy carry the label of an

independent testing laboratory.

- Smoke alarms can have a ten year lithium battery with a tamper resistant battery compartment or be hardwired directly to your home's electrical system with a battery backup. Either type is effective as long as they are installed and maintained properly (follow the manufacturer's directions).
- Some smoke alarms detect smoke using an ionization sensor while others use a photoelectric sensor. Again, both types are effective as long as they are installed and maintained properly, following the manufacturer's directions.

How Many and Where to Install?

The total number of smoke alarms and where they are installed depends on the home. Follow these guidelines for determining the number of smoke alarms and where to install them.

- Belmont Fire Department recommends that all residential buildings within the Village of Belmont have smoke alarms installed in the following areas:
 - In each bedroom
 - In each sleeping area
 - Within six feet of each door leading to a bedroom or sleeping area of each unit
 - On each floor of your home
- Smoke alarms are not recommended for kitchens, bathrooms, or garages where cooking fumes, steam, or exhaust fumes could result in false alarms.

- Do not install an alarm in an attic or other unheated spaces where humidity and temperature changes could affect the alarm's operation.
- If your alarm regularly goes off due to normal cooking in the kitchen, do not attempt to remove the battery. Physically move and reinstall the smoke alarm in a location where the alarm will not continually go off while you are cooking.
- Install smoke alarms following the manufacturer's directions. Most battery operated smoke alarms can be easily installed using a drill, screws, and screwdriver. Alarms hard-wired to the home's electrical system should be installed by a professional. Never install an alarm to a circuit that can be turned off from a wall switch.
- Mount alarms high on a wall or on the ceiling. Avoid dead air spaces. Wall-mounted alarms should be installed so that they are 4 to 12 inches from the ceiling. A ceiling-mounted alarm should be attached at least 4 inches from the nearest wall.

Maintenance & Batteries

- Only a functioning smoke alarm can protect you and your family.
- Never disable an alarm by "borrowing" its battery for another use.
- Test your smoke alarms monthly.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Clean your smoke alarms using a dust brush or rag.
- Never paint a smoke alarm.
- Replace smoke alarms that are more than 10 years old.

Home fires often occur in the darkness of night when residents are fast asleep. One misconception is that a person will wake up from the smell of smoke. This is **WRONG**. Smoke is a silent killer and contains many deadly gases, such as carbon monoxide, that will actually put a person into an even deeper state of sleep, causing a person never to wake up. Smoke alarms are your first line of defense to get out alive.