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STEPHEN D. COAN  
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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Heads of Fire Department

**From:** Stephen D. Coan  
State Fire Marshal

**Date:** November 1, 2013

**RE:** Beat the Beep Campaign: Replace Aging CO Alarms

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Since Nicole's Law was implemented in 2006, many Massachusetts homes have installed carbon monoxide (CO) alarms and many lives have been saved and injuries prevented. I am sure every fire department has a CO alarm success story from one of the extended power outages we've had these past few years. However, CO alarms only last 5-7 years and many are now coming to the end of their useful lives. No appliance lasts forever. The Department of Fire Services has information on our [website](#) to educate both first responders and the community at large about the importance of beating the beep and replacing aging CO alarms. We must encourage residents to continue to have working CO and smoke alarms in their homes.

### Beat the Beep

DFS has borrowed the slogan and logo from Kidde's *Beat the Beep* campaign to remind people to replace aging CO alarms. One of the signs that a carbon monoxide alarm has reached the "end of life" stage will be a "chirping" that does not stop until the unit is powered off. For models with a digital read out, it will have an "ERR" or "EO9" or "END" message. The most common sign is it makes the low battery signal even after brand new batteries are installed. That's the main reason behind the *Beat the Beep* campaign.

### Info for First Responders

First responders need to know that many CO alarms are reaching this end of life stage soon. When responding to homes where the CO alarm is beeping, it's important to check the age of the detector. The entire alarm and not just the batteries may need replacing in non-emergency cases. The DFS has a short PowerPoint™ for first responders on our [website](#) that is also being used by Mass. Firefighting Academy instructors.

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