

# Smoke Alarms *Save Lives*



*Every home in Massachusetts must have working smoke alarms.*

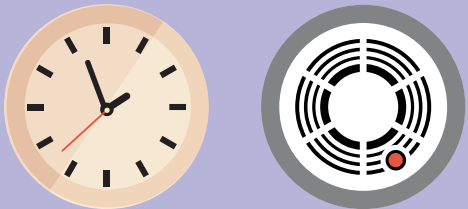
## **You may have less than three minutes to escape a fire at home.**

- Working smoke alarms alert you to danger. They can give you time to leave the building before deadly smoke, flames, and toxic gases block your escape route.
- Having working smoke alarms in your home can double your chances of survival if a fire occurs.
- Home fire deaths have been cut in half since the early 1970s when smoke alarms were first marketed.

## **Smoke alarms can't help you if they are missing or don't work.**

- Tragically, more than 3,000 people still die in fires each year in the U.S.

## **Change your clocks. Check your alarms.**



**If your alarms are 10 years old, replace them now.**

- Almost 60% of home fire deaths take place in homes without working smoke alarms.

## **Be safe, be aware, be protected.**

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including the basement.
- Test them every month.
- Replace alkaline batteries twice a year when you change your clocks.
- Replace alarms after 10 years.
- Never disable alarms or take out the batteries for any reason.

## **When the alarm sounds:**

- Teach your children and family to leave the building right away when they hear the smoke alarm.
- Get out and stay out.
- Go to the family meeting place.
- Call 9-1-1 from outdoors or from a neighbor's home.

## **Special smoke alarms are available for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing.**

A vibrating alarm can also be used under a pillow while the person is asleep. Consider a bedside device that senses the sound of smoke alarms.



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## Plan and practice a home fire escape route.

- Plan two ways out of your building and two ways out of each room, if possible.
- Discuss the plan so everyone in your family understands what to do in case of emergency.
- Choose a place outside the home where family members can meet to be sure everyone is safely out of the building.
- Young children, older adults, and people with disabilities may need extra assistance.



## General guidelines for smoke alarm placement

- On every level of your home.
- In hallways outside the bedroom.
- At the top of open stairways.
- At the base of cellar stairs.
- Inside the bedroom for sound sleepers or smokers.
- Contact your local fire department for exact locations.

# Test Smoke Alarms Monthly

## Maintenance

- Once a month, vacuum or blow out dust from the alarms.
- Push the test button.
- If the alarm uses regular batteries, change them twice a year when you change your clocks. A "chirping" sound means it's time to change the batteries.
- Don't paint smoke alarms

## Replace Smoke Alarms After 10 Years

- Check the manufacturing date printed on the back of your alarms. If an alarm is more than 10 years old, replace it right away.
- When purchasing a new smoke alarm, choose one with a sealed, long-life battery and a hush feature. Choose alarms from a well-known, national brand.
- If you have trouble buying, installing, or maintaining smoke alarms, call your local fire department.

