



**For Immediate Release
Date: November 2, 2023**

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Daylight Saving Time Ends; Time to Test, Inspect and Replace Life Saving Smoke Alarms

If your alarm was manufactured before October of 2013, it's time to replace that alarm with a 10-year sealed battery device.

Springfield, Ill- The Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal (OSFM) reminds residents to test, inspect and replace any broken or expired smoke and CO alarms while they change their clocks this upcoming weekend as daylight saving time comes to an end. Smoke alarms only have a life span of 10 years before they need to be replaced. If your alarm was manufactured before October of 2013, it's time to replace that alarm with a 10-year sealed battery device.

"Daylight Saving Time serves as a bi-annual reminder for residents to test, inspect and replace any broken or expired smoke and CO alarms in their homes that could save their life," **said Illinois State Fire Marshal James A. Rivera.** "Materials used in modern home construction burn hotter and faster reducing the escape times to less than 3 minutes in most cases. Families need to review their fire escape plans and hold drills to ensure everyone in the house knows at least two ways out of every room and where to meet outside of the home in the event of a fire."

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reports that between 2014-2018, almost three out of every five home fire deaths in the U.S. resulted from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or non-working smoke alarms. The death rate per 1,000 reported home fires was more than twice as high in homes that did not have any working smoke alarms compared to the rate in homes with working smoke alarms. In fires in which the smoke alarms were present but did not operate, two of every five of the smoke alarms had missing or disconnected batteries. Dead batteries caused 26% of the smoke alarm failures. Replacing alarms that have missing batteries or are either expired or broken with new ten-year sealed detectors will help reduce residential fire deaths across the state.

Here are some tips to help your family prepare or update their home fire escape plan:

- Get everyone in your household together and make a home escape plan. Walk through your home and look for two ways out of every room.
- Make sure escape routes are clear of debris and doors and windows open easily. Windows with security bars or grills should have an emergency release device.

- Plan an outside meeting place where everyone will meet once they have escaped. A good meeting place is something permanent, like a tree, light pole, or mailbox a safe distance in front of the home.
- If there are infants, older adults, family members with mobility limitations or children who do not wake to the sound of the smoke alarm, make sure that someone is assigned to assist them in the event of an emergency.
- If the smoke alarm sounds, get outside and stay outside. Respond quickly – get up and go, remember to know two ways out of every room, get yourself outside quickly, and go to your outside meeting place with your family.
- Once you're out, stay out! Under no circumstances should you ever go back into a burning building. If someone is missing, inform the fire department dispatcher when you call. Firefighters have the skills and equipment to perform rescues.

More tips on fire escape planning can be found by visiting: <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Staying-safe/Preparedness/Escape-planning>.

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