

Change Your Clock, Install a New Smoke Alarm!



This smoke alarm was destroyed in a house fire -- but the people got out safely because the alarm did its job.

In 2007, 22 Oregonians died in residential fires where no smoke alarms were found or the alarm did not activate. Eighteen of those deaths occurred in one- or two-family houses.

For years, "Change your clock, change your smoke alarm battery" was the advice from your firefighters. New technology has changed that. Now firefighters are asking you to "Change your clock, install a new smoke alarm with a 10-year lithium battery."

Any smoke alarm that is more than 10 years old has lost much of its effectiveness and should be replaced. A 1998 Oregon law requires that any new smoke alarm sold or installed in Oregon must contain a lithium battery that is expected to last up to 10 years.

Never replace the battery in a new-technology smoke alarm. Instead, replace the entire unit. New alarms are simply not designed to work for longer than the 10-year life span.

The new smoke alarms also have a "Hush Button". This button will silence the alarm when nuisance smoke or shower steam accidentally set it off. Pushing the button will silence the device for up to 15 minutes before it resets itself. By installing a new smoke alarm, with the "Hush Button", you will never forget to put the battery back in after a nuisance activation.

None of these features reduce the need to test every smoke alarm every month.

The new alarms are more economical too. While the initial cost may be \$15.00, for 10 years that's only \$1.50 per year. The old technology required the initial purchase plus a replacement battery every year. The 10 year cost for old technology would typically be about \$30.00 or more, or over twice what the new technology represents. Also, the new alarms have the date recorded on the back so you can tell its age.

Smoke alarms continue to provide your best protection against dying in a fire. Most fires occur in the home and the greatest risk is when you are sleeping. Protect yourself and your loved ones by checking your smoke alarm today and replacing the old technology with the new (smoke alarms with a lithium battery and hush feature).

Portland Fire & Rescue Reminds You:

- Test all smoke alarms each month to ensure they work.
- Install new technology smoke alarms today.
- Remember the hush feature to silence it when nuisance alarms sound.
- Install a smoke alarm on each level of your home, near sleeping areas. Portland Fire & Rescue also recommends one inside each bedroom.
- Have and practice a home escape plan. It's the only way to be sure your family is prepared when the smoke alarm sounds.
- Remember to help elderly relatives and friends check their alarms after you check the alarms in your home.