

Fire is Everyone's Fight

We all play a role in preventing fires and fire deaths. Here are some tips that can keep you and your family safe, sound and secure in the event of a fire:

- **Escape Plan** – Have a family fire escape plan with a designated meeting place. Regularly practice your plan.
- **Get Out, Stay Out** – If there is a fire, get out and stay out! Call the fire department from a cellphone or a neighbor's phone. Never go back into the home.
- **Parents** – Hold a fire drill during the night so you can assess your children's ability to wake up and respond appropriately.
- **Impaired Hearing** – If you have impaired hearing, consider installing smoke alarms that use strobe lights and devices that vibrate when the alarm is sounding.
- **Batteries** – Consider purchasing a long-life (lithium) battery-powered smoke alarm, which may last up to ten years with no battery change.
- **Interconnect** – Smoke alarms that are interconnected are best, because if one sounds, they all sound.



Smoke Alarms

Smoke alarms are a vital home fire safety tool. They can save lives, prevent injuries and minimize property damage by detecting fires early in their development, and alerting you quickly. An early warning gives you the chance to get out safely.

Use this information to ensure you and your family are well protected with smoke alarms.

Ohio

Department
of Commerce



State Fire Marshal

Choosing a Smoke Alarm

There are three types of smoke alarms: Ionization, Photoelectric, and Dual. Each detects different types of fires. Before purchasing a Smoke Alarm, check with your Local Fire Department - some Ohio cities have laws pertaining to smoke alarms.

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Ionization smoke alarms generally are more responsive to flaming fires. The ionization unit uses ions, or electrically charged particles, to detect smoke in the air. The greater the amount of smoke, the higher the electrical imbalance. The alarm sounds when the electrical imbalance reaches a certain level.

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Photoelectric smoke alarms generally are more responsive to fires that begin with a long period of smoldering. This type of alarm uses a beam of light and a light sensor in a sensing chamber. The greater the amount of smoke, the more light hits the sensor. The alarm sounds when the amount of light hitting the sensor reaches a certain level.

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Dual sensor smoke alarms include both ionization and photoelectric sensors, so they can detect smoldering fires or flaming fires.

You can decide which type of smoke alarm to purchase – the most important thing is to have working smoke alarms. Make sure the smoke alarm is listed in accordance with Underwriters Laboratories (UL) 217.

Installing Smoke Alarms

Now that you've selected a smoke alarm, it's time to install it. Smoke alarms should be installed:

- On each level, including the basement and habitable attics, use both photoelectric and ionization smoke alarms, or a dual sensing smoke alarm.
- In each sleeping room, use both photoelectric and ionization smoke alarms, or a dual sensing smoke alarm.
- Immediately outside each separate sleeping area, use a photoelectric or dual smoke alarm.
- Be sure to follow the manufacturer's and Ohio Building instructions for placement and installation.

Maintaining Smoke Alarms

A few simple steps will make sure your smoke alarms are in good working order.

- Test smoke alarms monthly. Push the test button on the unit to make sure the alarm sounds.
- Clean your alarm at least once a year. Vacuum out any dust and cobwebs that may have accumulated.
- Replace the batteries twice a year – Daylight Savings Time is a good way to remember to do this. If your smoke alarm is powered by your home's electrical system (or hardwired), you still need to replace the back-up battery. The only time you don't have to replace the battery is if your smoke alarm uses a non-replaceable 10-year lithium (long-life) battery.
- Never disable the smoke alarm or remove the battery.
- Replace any smoke alarm that is older than 10 years – that's the service life of the smoke alarm.