



CITY OF BURNSVILLE, MINNESOTA FIRE DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 1, 2013

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SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES — BUT ONLY IF THEY WORK

Change Your Alarm Batteries When You Change Your Clocks This Weekend

People die every year in Minnesota homes where smoke alarms are absent or not properly working.

Those deaths are preventable, which is why State Fire Marshal Jerry Rosendahl urges everyone to put fresh batteries in home smoke and carbon monoxide alarms when they turn their clocks back one hour this weekend. Smoke alarms need to be checked often and batteries changed at least once a year. Alarms should be replaced after 10 years.

The peak time for home fire fatalities is between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m., when most people are sleeping. Last year in Minnesota, only three fire deaths took place in homes where smoke alarms were known to be present and working.

“These devices save lives every day and ignoring them can be a fatal mistake,” Rosendahl said.

Rosendahl said the most common reason alarms don’t work is dead or missing batteries. Some people even remove them for other uses or to eliminate nuisance alarms.

“They’re gambling with their lives,” Rosendahl said. “When fire strikes, working alarms and a good escape plan become life-or-death issues.”

In addition to changing alarm batteries this weekend, Rosendahl recommends the following:

- Dust or vacuum smoke and carbon monoxide alarms when you change batteries.
- Test alarms once a month using the test button.
- Replace the entire alarm if it’s more than 10 years old.
- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including the basement, and place them inside and outside of sleeping areas.
- Interconnect alarms in your home so that when one sounds, they all sound.
- Make sure everyone in your home knows how to respond when alarms sound.
- Prepare and practice an escape plan to get everyone out of your home safely.

“Change alarm batteries each time you turn your clocks back,” Rosendahl said. “It’s easy to remember, simple to do and provides essential protection for your life and property.”

To learn more about smoke and carbon monoxide alarm safety visit www.burnsville.org/firesafety.