

Testing

Test your smoke detectors at least once a month, following the manufacturer's instructions. Both battery-operated and electric smoke detectors become less effective with age. If your detector does not respond to the recommended test procedure (usually pressing a "test" button), change its batteries. If it still does not perform, replace it.

Cleaning

Follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning your smoke detectors. Cobwebs and dust can generally be removed using a vacuum cleaner attachment. If you are doing work around a detector that could send dust into the air, cover the detector (don't forget to remove the cover when you're through). Never paint any part of a smoke detector.

Detect, Protect!

Once your smoke detectors are up and running, make sure everyone in the household is familiar with the sound of the alarms and that they can be heard behind closed bedroom doors.

Plan escape routes and review them with all family members. Have at least two ways to get out of every room in your home. Agree on a meeting place outside your home where everyone can gather after they escape. Practice your escape.

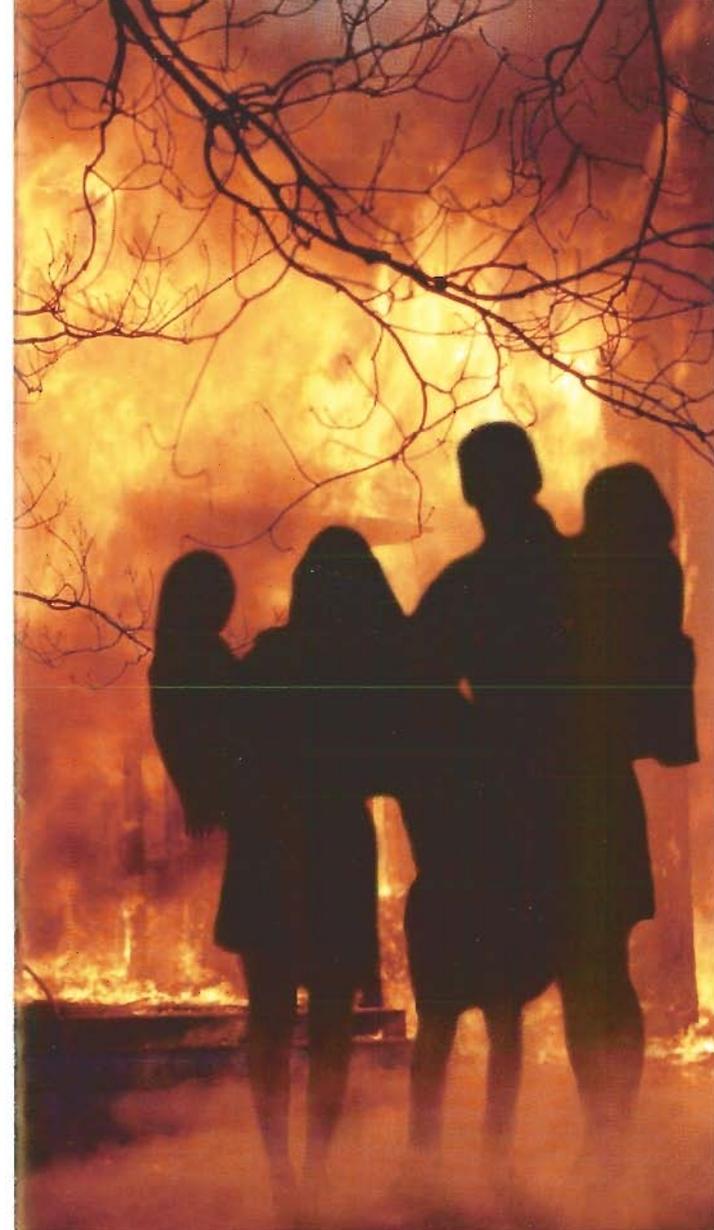
When an alarm sounds, leave immediately. Go directly to your outside meeting place. Call the fire department.

Get out and stay out. Never return to a burning building.



State Farm Fire and Casualty Company
State Farm General Insurance Company

Home Offices: Bloomington, Illinois
www.statefarm.com



**No Doubt About It:
Working
Smoke Detectors
Save Lives**

The National Fire Protection Association estimates about 93 percent of U.S. homes have at least one smoke detector.

But, consider these startling facts:

- Almost half of all home fires and three-fifths of fire deaths occur in homes with no detectors.
- Your chances of dying in a home fire are cut in half if you have a working smoke detector.
- There are more homes with smoke detectors that don't work, than homes without any detectors. These poorly maintained units create a false sense of security for residents.

No Doubt About It: WORKING Smoke Detectors Save Lives.

By properly selecting, placing, testing and maintaining your smoke detector, you will greatly increase your chances of surviving a home fire.

Detector Selector

When you head to the store, you'll find there are many different types of detectors on the market. There are battery-operated detectors and others that run on electricity. There are "ionization" sensors and "photoelectric" detectors.

You can find good, standard smoke detectors for \$10 to \$25. There are special detectors for people with hearing impairments that have both an audible alarm and intense flashing lights; these are available for around \$100 each.

No matter what type of detector you purchase, make sure it is approved by an independent testing laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL) or Factory Mutual (FM).

One? Two? Three? More?

The number of detectors you need depends upon the size of your home.

A smoke detector should be placed outside each sleeping area and on every level of existing homes, including the basement. For new homes, National Fire Protection Association guidelines require builders to install smoke detectors inside each bedroom. On floors without bedrooms, install detectors in or near living areas, such as dens and living rooms. Detectors in dining rooms, utility rooms and hallways will provide added protection.

Put 'em Up

Installing a smoke detector is simple.

A screwdriver and a drill are all you need to install a battery-operated detector. For detectors that plug into an electrical outlet, be certain to use a restraining device so the plug can't be accidentally jarred loose. Detectors can also be hardwired directly into your home's electrical system. Hardwire installation should be done by a qualified electrician. Never connect a detector to a circuit that can be turned off by a wall switch.

Always follow the manufacturer's installation instructions and be sure your detectors are held securely in place. Because smoke rises, detectors should be mounted high on a wall or on the ceiling.

- Wall-mounted detectors should be installed so the top is 6 to 12 inches from the ceiling.
- Ceiling-mounted units should be installed at least 6 inches from any wall.
- If a room has a pitched ceiling, mount the detector at or near the ceiling's highest point.
- In stairways with no doors at the top or bottom, position detectors in the path smoke would follow up the stairwell.
- Mount detectors at the bottom of closed stairways, such as those leading to a basement. Dead air trapped near the door at the top of a stairway could prevent smoke from reaching a detector located at the top.
- Don't install a detector too close to windows, doors or forced-air registers, where drafts could interfere with the detector's operation.
- If you have questions about the best places to install detectors, contact your local fire department for advice. Many departments will conduct home smoke detector inspections for free or for a nominal fee.

Don't Shirk the Work

Only properly functioning smoke detectors can protect you. Make regular maintenance a priority:

Batteries

Batteries weaken with age and must be regularly checked and replaced (generally every 9 to 12 months). **NEVER** disable a detector by "borrowing" its battery for another use.

