



STRATHMORE FIRE DEPARTMENT COMMUNITY OUTREACH

SMOKE ALARMS / DETECTORS

In the event of a fire, a smoke alarm can save your life and those of your loved ones. They are one of the most important means of preventing fire fatalities by providing an early warning signal so you and your family can escape.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Install smoke alarms on every level of your home. Most importantly, smoke alarms should be installed near sleeping areas. Many fatal fires begin late at night or in the early morning. For extra safety, install smoke alarms inside bedrooms.

The best location to install a smoke alarm is on the ceiling. Since smoke rises installing your smoke alarm at the proper level will provide you with the earliest warning possible. Always follow the manufacturers' installation instructions.

MAINTAINING YOUR SMOKE ALARM

Monthly – Test your smoke alarm by pressing the “test button” on the face of the alarm. Pressing the button indicates that the power supply (120 volt house current or 9 volt battery supply) is functioning.

Yearly – The sensing chamber should be tested annually to ensure it is still active. The proper way to test a smoke alarm sensing chamber is by producing a small amount of smoke that can drift up to the smoke alarm. The alarm should activate within 20 seconds or less. This test should be done when changing the battery.

Batteries – Batteries should be changed once a year or when your smoke alarm gives off a faint peep sound every few seconds or minutes. This beep is an indication that the batteries are weak. A good time to change batteries is in the spring or fall.

Keep them clean – Dust and debris can interfere with their operation, so vacuum over and around the smoke alarms, this will help prevent false alarms.

NUISANCE ALARMS

If you have a “nuisance alarm” that goes off frequently with cooking fumes or humidity from the bathroom, do not remove the battery. Move the smoke alarm further from the kitchen or bathroom, or consider a photo electric smoke alarm in these areas.

Newer smoke alarms have a hush feature button that can be activated silencing the alarm for a set time allowing the sensing chamber to clear.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD WE CHANGE OUR SMOKE ALARMS?

The life expectancy of smoke alarms is generally 10 years, after which point their sensors can begin to lose sensitivity. Look for the replacement sticker (on new alarms) reminding you in which year you need to replace the smoke alarm with a new one.

PERSONS WITH HEARING LOSS

Information on where to purchase Smoke Alarms for people with hearing loss, contact Strathmore Fire Department 403-934-3022.