

Fire Alarms and Smoke Alarms



Many people may believe that their home is adequately protected if they have at least one smoke alarm in the home. However, smoke alarms should be installed on every level of the home (including the basement), outside each sleeping area, and inside each bedroom. Larger homes may need additional smoke alarms

Fire Alarm Systems, as opposed to smoke alarms, are made up of multiple components and are designed to notify all the occupants throughout an entire building. There are different types of fire alarm systems in multi-family housing, local and supervised. Local systems sound an alarm on-site only while supervised systems automatically call the fire department. Regardless of the type of system, always call to 911 in the event of a fire.



Test your Smoke Alarm

Smoke Alarms are mounted on the ceiling or wall and are designed to alert occupants of the presence of smoke, especially during times when your family is asleep. When your smoke alarm detects smoke, it will automatically activate sounding an alarm inside your living space only, not the entire building.

- Test at least once a month.
- Push the test button or use smoke.
- Clean at least once a month.
- Dust with a vacuum to unclog the vents.
- Replace the battery at least once a year.

Fire Drills aren't just for schools

According to a National Fire Protection Association survey, less than 25 percent of Americans have an escape plan and practice regular fire drills.

- At least twice a year, push the smoke alarm button to start your home fire drill.
- Get out fast.
- Practice escaping from bedrooms when people are asleep.
- Make sure everyone in your household can open all doors and windows. Security bars on windows should have emergency release devices so they can be opened easily from the inside.
- Go to your meeting place.
- In a real fire, get out and stay out.
- Call 9-1-1 from outside.

Types of Smoke Alarms

There are two types of home smoke alarms available; the ion type and the photoelectric type. The ion type reacts faster to open flaming fires and is usually the least expensive. The photoelectric type reacts faster to smoldering fires and is less likely to react to cooking. Both types provide good protection and can be used without worry. The Everett Fire Department recommends installing a dual sensor Smoke Alarm. Most operate on a battery (usually 9 volt), which should be replaced at least once a year.

The facts about smoke inhalation

The number one cause of death related to fires is smoke inhalation. An estimated 50%-80% of fire deaths are the result of smoke inhalation injuries rather than burns.

Smoke inhalation occurs when you breathe in the products of combustion during a fire. Combustion results from the rapid breakdown of a substance by heat (more commonly called burning). Smoke is a mixture of heated particles and gases. It is impossible to predict the exact composition of smoke produced by a fire. The products being burned, the temperature of the fire, and the amount of oxygen available to the fire all make a difference in the type of smoke produced.

