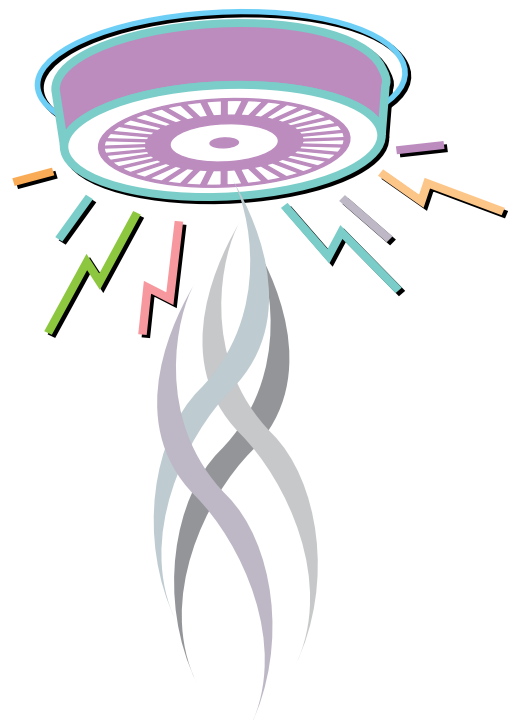


Smoke Alarm Facts



www.manitoba.ca/firecomm

Smoke Alarm Facts

Working smoke alarms save lives, cutting the risk of dying in a home fire in half. Did you know that most deaths due to house fires happen at night, while people are sleeping? Without a working smoke alarm, you may never wake up due to the effects of poisonous gas and smoke created by fire.

How to choose a Smoke Alarm

There are two types of smoke alarms, *ionization* and *Photoelectric*. An ionization smoke alarm is more responsive to flaming fires, and a photoelectric smoke alarm is more responsive to smoldering fires. Photoelectric smoke alarms are the best type of alarms to install near the kitchen and bathrooms to reduce nuisance alarms.

Smoke alarms run on batteries or are wired directly into your home's electrical system. You can easily install battery-powered smoke alarms following the manufacturer's instructions, although, a qualified electrician should install units that use your home's electrical system. These hard-wired alarms should be purchased with a battery back-up in case of power outages. Installing a combination of ionization and photoelectric smoke alarms in your home can enhance fire safety. No matter which model you select, carefully follow the manufacturer's instructions on testing and maintenance.

- Choose a smoke alarm that is listed by a qualified testing laboratory.
- Interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home for the best protection. When one sounds, they all sound. It is especially important to have interconnected smoke alarms if you sleep with the door closed.
- Install smoke alarms and alert devices that meet the needs of people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Where should you install your smoke alarms?

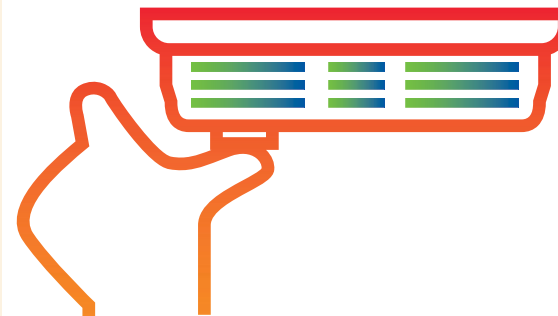
- Inside every sleeping room, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. Larger homes may require additional smoke alarms to provide a minimum level of protection. Don't forget to install a smoke alarm in the basement.
- Smoke alarms should be mounted on the ceiling approximately 15 centimeters (six inches) from the wall. Do not install smoke alarms at the top of stairways – dead air spaces may hamper smoke from reaching the smoke alarm and result in a delayed warning in case of fire.
- Install smoke alarms at least three meters (10 feet) from a cooking appliance to avoid nuisance alarms.

What does it mean when my smoke alarm "chirps"?

It's time to install a new battery. If your smoke alarms continues to "chirp" after you change the battery, then it's time to get a new smoke alarm.

Can you hear your smoke alarm at night?

Some people are very sound sleepers and most noises won't awaken them, so it is a good idea to test your smoke alarms while your family is sleeping. This will ensure that all members will be awakened by the alarms and able to escape a fire in time.



Check your smoke alarm regularly!

Test your smoke alarms every month by pressing and holding the test button for a few seconds. The alarm should sound immediately. Replace models that do not have test buttons or that are more than 10 years old.

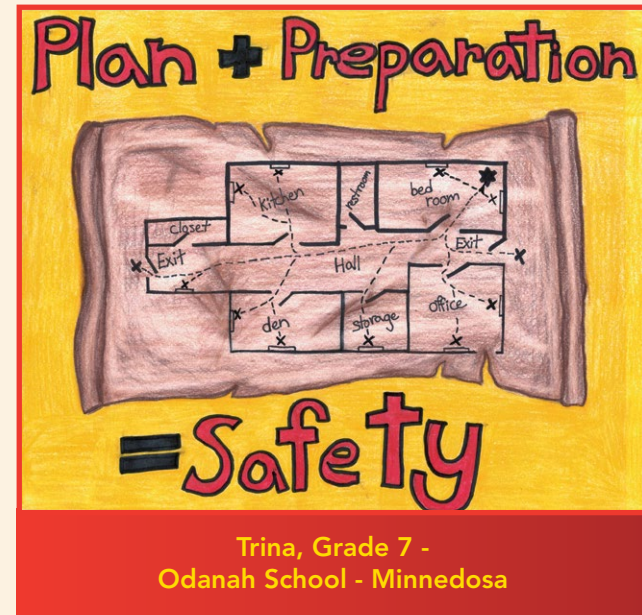
Change the battery in your smoke alarm at least once a year, more often if necessary. If your smoke alarm does not respond after replacing the battery, replace the unit.

A beeping smoke alarm may need cleaning. Clean your smoke alarms once a year by removing the cover and carefully wiping it with a damp cloth. Gently vacuum the sensor unit inside. Replace the cover and test the smoke alarm to make sure it is working properly. If it doesn't stop beeping, replace the unit.

The sound of a smoke alarm can be frightening and disorienting, especially if it goes off in the middle of the night. To be prepared, you should develop and practice a home fire escape plan.

Practice prevents panic! Children will follow a fire drill if they have been prepared ahead of time. Make sure every family member, including visitors to your home, know what to do in an emergency and is familiar with your home fire escape plan.

Draw a floor plan of every level of your home to show every possible exit from every room. Each room should have a main, and an alternate exit.



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