

Maintaining Your Alarms

- Always save and follow the alarm manufacturer's instructions for testing and maintenance.
- Test alarms at least once a month by pushing the test button.
- Replace batteries in all smoke alarms at least once a year. If an alarm "chirps" that's a warning the battery is low, replace batteries right away.
- Replace all smoke alarms, including alarms that use 10-year non-replaceable batteries and hard-wired alarms when they are 10 years old or sooner if they do not respond properly when tested.



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Home Smoke Alarms

HOWARD COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF FIRE
AND RESCUE SERVICES



Alarms Save Lives

Smoke alarms save lives. 65% of home fire deaths happen in homes without smoke alarms or with smoke alarms that do not work. When there is a fire, smoke spreads fast and you need smoke alarms to give you time to get out.

Choosing Your Alarms

- Smoke alarm has an approved testing laboratory label.
- Alarms that run on household current require installation by a qualified electrician.
- Alarms that run on just batteries can be installed by anyone.
- Alarms with a recordable voice announcement in addition to the usual alarm sound may be helpful for waking children through a familiar voice.
- Alarms with strobe lights are available for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Nuisance Alarms

- If cooking fumes or steam sets off nuisance alarms, replace with an alarm that has a “hush” button, which will temporarily reduce the alarm’s sensitivity for a short period of time.
- Use a photoelectric alarm or ionization alarm with a hush button if the alarm is within 20 feet of a cooking appliance.



- An ionization smoke alarm is generally more responsive to flaming fires.
- Photoelectric smoke alarm is generally more responsive to smoldering fires.
- Both types of detection alarms or a combination alarm should be installed in the home.

Installing Your Alarms

- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of the home (including the basement).
- Interconnect all smoke alarms through out the home. When one sounds, they all sound.
- Follow the manufacture’s installation instructions.

Alarm Installation and Placement

Measurements shown are to the closest edge of the alarm.

Some states and jurisdictions only allow smoke alarms to be installed on the ceiling.

