



City of Madison Fire Department

News Release

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This Year – Change Your Clocks & Smoke Alarms

For years, the City of Madison Fire Department has used the switch from Daylight Savings Time as a reminder to change smoke alarm batteries. This year, the Department is encouraging residents to change their smoke alarms.

The difference is the smoke alarm ordinance passed by the Common Council in March that will require smoke alarms with 10-year lithium batteries designed to last the life of the smoke alarm.

A working smoke detector can increase a person's chances of surviving a fire by providing the extra time that is needed to safely escape. Nationally, more than 90 percent of all homes have smoke detectors, but it is estimated that one-third of those don't work because of old or missing batteries.

Under the newly adopted ordinance, all smoke alarms must have a 10-year battery in a tamper-resistant alarm unit. 9-volt batteries will no longer be used UNLESS they are being used as a battery back-up to a hard-wired alarm.

The ordinance also requires additional alarms in the residence:

- o In each bedroom
- o In each sleeping area
- o Within six feet of each door leading to a bedroom or sleeping area of each unit
- o On each floor of the building

The ordinance went into effect on August 15 of this year for all residential buildings in the City of Madison, except for owner-occupied, single-family homes; on August 15, 2010 it goes into effect for all residential structures, including owner-occupied, single-family housing.

Information on the ordinance, placement of the alarms, and safety education materials is being made available on the Department's website at www.madisonfire.org.

The Madison Fire Department offers the following fire safety recommendations:

1. Make sure you have smoke detectors on all levels of your home.
2. Test your smoke alarms monthly.
3. Follow all manufacturer's instructions.
4. Clean your smoke alarms using a dust brush or rag.
5. Never paint a smoke alarm.
6. Replace smoke alarms that are more than 10 years old.
7. Have an escape plan for your home and practice home fire escape drills.

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