



Change Your Clock Change Your Battery[®] Fact Sheet

Fire Facts:

- 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. are the peak alarm times for home fire deaths – when people tend to be asleep and the house is likely to be dark.
- Home fires kill an average of seven people every day.
- Home fires caused \$11.6 billion in property damage during 2010.
- Although the number of home fire deaths has substantially decreased, the risk of dying in a reported home fire has not.
- On average, families have less than three minutes from the time the first smoke alarm sounds to escape a fire.

Those at greatest risk:

- Children under five are 1.4 times more likely as the population as a whole to die in home fires.
- Roughly three-quarters of child fire fatalities under age 15 occurred in homes without working smoke alarms.
- On average, home fires kill 500 children ages 14 and under each year.
- Roughly half of the people who died in home fires started by playing with fire were under five years old.
- Seniors age 75 and older are 2.8 times more likely to die in a home fire.

Smoke Alarm and Fire Safety Facts:

- 96 percent of American homes have at least one smoke alarm, but 20 percent of all homes with smoke alarms do not have at least one smoke alarm that works, mostly due to missing or dead batteries. This means roughly 23 million homes are at risk because of non-working smoke alarms and an additional 5 million homes are at risk by not having smoke alarms.
- In the U.S., almost two-thirds of home fire deaths resulted from fires in homes with inoperable smoke alarms or no smoke alarms. Thirty-eight percent of the fatal fire injuries occurred in homes with no smoke alarms at all, while 24% occurred in homes in which at least one smoke alarm was present but failed to operate.
- Nuisance activations were the leading cause of disabled smoke alarms. Cooking fumes and steam can cause a smoke alarm to sound. Nuisance alarms can be prevented by moving the smoke alarm farther from kitchens or bathrooms. A chirping smoke alarm means the battery is dying.
- Households with non-working smoke alarms now outnumber those with no smoke alarms.
- The National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code recommends a minimum of one smoke alarm on each level of a home, including the basement, one inside each bedroom and one outside each sleeping area. Homes should also have at least one working carbon monoxide alarm on each level of a home, including the basement and one outside each sleeping area.

- Smoke alarm failures usually result from missing, disconnected, or dead batteries.
- Smoke alarms don't last forever. They should be replaced at least every 10 years.
- Only 23 percent of U.S. families have developed and practiced a home fire escape plan to ensure they could escape quickly and safely.

Carbon Monoxide Facts

- Carbon monoxide is sometimes called the “the silent killer.” It is colorless, odorless and tasteless. The National Safety Council reports that almost 700 people die each year as a result of unintentional poisoning by gases or vapors in non-fire situations. Carbon monoxide was involved in the majority of these deaths.

Source: Fire statistics were obtained from reports by the Fire Analysis and Research Division of the National Fire Protection Association. See www.nfpa.org for more information.