

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD. FIRE / EMS DEPARTMENT *TIPsheet*



UNDERSTANDING MARYLAND'S NEW SMOKE ALARM LAW

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON MARYLAND'S NEW SMOKE ALARM LAW AND ANY OTHER LIFE SAFETY CODE REQUIREMENTS, PLEASE CALL 301-583-1830 DURING REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS.




10-YEAR SMOKE ALARM

- Best for living areas, hallways and bedrooms
- Never needs new battery
- Lasts 10 years



SMOKE & CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTOR

- Best for kitchen - distinguishes between cooking and fire smoke
- Never needs new battery
- Lasts 10 years

A new state law aimed at reducing home fire deaths went into effect on July 1, 2013. It requires replacement of any battery only operated smoke alarm that is more than 10 years old with a unit powered by a 10 year sealed-in battery—ultimately affecting more than 800,000 Maryland homes with battery-operated smoke alarms. These sealed-in, long life battery alarms provide continuous protection for a decade, and national fire experts such as the National Fire Protection Association and the National Association of State Fire Marshals recommend their use.

WHY IS HAVING A SEALED BATTERY SO IMPORTANT?

Nationally, two-thirds of all home fire deaths occur in homes with either no smoke alarm or no working smoke alarm, mainly due to missing or disconnected batteries. Last year in Maryland, nearly half of the fire fatalities were in homes with inoperable alarms or no alarms at all. By sealing the battery inside the smoke alarm, the unit becomes tamper resistant and removes the burden from citizens to remember to change the batteries, which will save lives.

ALL SMOKE ALARMS NEED TO BE REPLACED EVERY 10 YEARS REGARDLESS OF TYPE

WHEN DO I NEED TO REPLACE MY SMOKE ALARM?

The new Maryland Smoke Alarm Law requires the replacement of smoke alarms when they are 10 years old (**from date of manufacture**). The date of manufacture, while sometimes hard to locate, should be printed on the back of the smoke alarm. If no manufacture date can be located, it is clearly time to replace the smoke alarm.

WHAT IS THE BEST LOCATION TO INSTALL MY SMOKE ALARM?

Smoke alarms should be installed outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home including the basement and garage. For the best protection, have a licensed electrician **INTERCONNECT** all smoke alarms so when one sounds, they all sound. Smoke alarms should be installed away from the kitchen to prevent false alarms. Generally, they should be installed at least 10 feet from any cooking appliances.

IT IS NEVER ACCEPTABLE TO REMOVE REQUIRED HARD WIRED SMOKE ALARMS INSTALLED AFTER JULY 1, 1978 AND REPLACE THEM WITH ANY TYPE OF BATTERY OPERATED DEVICE.

