

Smoke alarms

Working smoke alarms give you early warning of a fire so you have a better chance of getting out alive. In the event of a fire, you may have as little as two minutes to escape safely, so early notification is key.

- ▶ Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room, outside each sleeping area and on every level of your home. Install alarms in the basement. Larger homes may need additional smoke alarms to provide a minimum level of protection.
 - ▶ A smoke alarm should be on the ceiling or high on a wall. Keep smoke alarms away from the kitchen to reduce false alarms. They should be at least 10 feet (three metres) away from a cooking appliance.
- ▶ If possible, interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home, so when one sounds, they all sound.
- ▶ Choose a smoke alarm that is listed by a qualified testing laboratory.
- ▶ Test your smoke alarms at least once per month by pushing the test button.
- ▶ Make sure everyone in the home understands the sound of the smoke alarm and knows how to respond.
- ▶ Smoke alarms with non-replaceable (long-life) batteries are designed to remain effective for up to 10 years. If the alarm chirps, warning that the battery is low, replace the entire smoke alarm right away.
- ▶ For smoke alarms that do not have non-replaceable (long-life) batteries, replace batteries at least once a year. If the alarm chirps, replace only the battery.
- ▶ Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.
- ▶ Follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning to keep smoke alarms working. The instructions are included in the package or can be found online.

Carbon monoxide (CO) alarms

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a gas you cannot see, taste or smell. Symptoms of CO poisoning include headache, nausea and drowsiness. CO is often called the “invisible killer” because it can render you unconscious before you realize something is happening to you. Exposure to CO can be fatal.

CO poisoning can result from gas-, gasoline- and diesel-fueled vehicles idling inside garages, malfunctioning or improperly vented water heaters, clothes dryers, furnaces and other heating appliances, and portable generators.

CO alarms detect the presence of carbon monoxide and alert you so you can get out, call 9-1-1 and let the professionals check your home.

- ▶ Install CO alarms outside each sleeping area, on every level of your home and in other locations as required. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for placement and mounting height.
- ▶ If possible, interconnect all CO alarms throughout the home, so when one sounds, they all sound.
- ▶ Choose a smoke alarm that is listed by a qualified testing laboratory.
- ▶ Test your CO alarms at least once per month by pushing the test button. If they fail to respond, replace them.
- ▶ Make sure everyone in the home understands the sound of the CO alarm and knows how to respond.
- ▶ Replace all CO alarms when they expire according to manufacturer’s instructions.
- ▶ Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for cleaning to keep CO alarms working. The instructions are included in the package or can be found online.

Smoke and CO alarms for people who are deaf or hard of hearing

There are special alarms and devices that help individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing be alerted to smoke, fire and CO. Install smoke alarms and alert devices that meets the needs of people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Below are some options to consider:

- ▶ Install a smoke alarm that has flashing strobe lights that will alert you of smoke or fire when you are awake.

- ▶ Use a pillow or bed shaker alarm to wake and alert you to fire conditions when you are sleeping. These devices are activated by the sound of a standard smoke alarm. People who are deaf may find that the shaker paired with a high-intensity strobe light is helpful to wake them.
- ▶ Install a smoke and CO alarm that uses a low-frequency sound. These will work better to wake a sleeping person who has mild-to-severe hearing loss.
- ▶ These special devices and alarms can also signal when the battery is low.

Common sounds and what they mean

Learn the sounds of fire safety. If there is a beep or chirp coming from your smoke or carbon monoxide (CO) alarm, you need to know how to respond.

Alarms can make sounds for several reasons, such as to notify you when smoke and/or CO is detected, or to notify you that batteries need to be changed or the device has reached its expiration.

Learn the different sounds your smoke and CO alarms make by checking the manufacturer's instructions that came in the box, or search the brand and model online.

Smoke alarms

- ▶ Continuous set of three loud beeps – beep, beep, beep – means smoke or fire is detected. Get out, call 9-1-1 and stay out.
- ▶ Single chirp every 30 or 60 seconds means the battery is low and must be replaced.
- ▶ Chirping that continues after the battery is replaced means the alarm is at the end of its life and needs to be replaced.

Carbon monoxide (CO) alarms

- ▶ Continuous set of four loud beeps – beep, beep, beep, beep – means CO is detected. Get outside, call 9-1-1 and stay out.
- ▶ Single chirp every 30 or 60 seconds means the battery is low and must be replaced.
- ▶ Chirping that continues after the battery is replaced means the alarm is at the end of its life and needs to be replaced.



FIRE PREVENTION TIP SHEET

SMOKE AND CO ALARMS

What to do if there is a fire

When there is a fire, your priority is to keep yourself and others safe.

1. Ensure you and all others get out of the home safely.
2. Close the door behind you to help contain the fire.
3. Call 9-1-1 from outside the home.

If you are unable to escape, call 9-1-1 and tell the dispatcher your location in the home.

Stop, drop and roll

If your hair or clothes catch fire, stop, drop and roll.

- ▶ **STOP** immediately! Do not run or attempt to remove your clothing.
- ▶ **DROP** to the ground as quickly and safely as possible. Use your hands to cover your face.
- ▶ **ROLL** back and forth or over on the ground until the fire is out.

If you cannot stop, drop and roll, smother the flames with a towel or blanket. Use cool water for three-to-five minutes to cool the burn, and get medical help immediately by calling 9-1-1.

What to do if your CO alarm sounds

- ▶ Ensure you and all others get out of the home safely to a fresh air location outdoors.
- ▶ Call 9-1-1 from the fresh air location.
- ▶ Remain there until emergency personnel declare that it is safe to re-enter the home.

*Information contained in this tip sheet has been modified from the **National Fire Protection Association**.*

Contact Leduc County Fire Services

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