



NEWS from STATE FIRE



NEW YORK STATE
OFFICE OF FIRE PREVENTION & CONTROL
99 Washington Avenue, Suite 500, Albany, NY 12210-2833

Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor

Bryant Stevens, Acting State Fire Administrator

Media Contact:
William Peat Jr.
(518) 292-2311
wpeat@dhses.ny.gov

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New Yorkers Reminded to Test Smoke Alarms This Weekend

Changing of clocks is good time to test alarms and change batteries

This weekend, as clocks are changed back to standard time, the Office of Fire Prevention and Control (OFPC) reminds all New Yorkers that they should also take a moment to test their smoke alarms.

“We all enjoy that extra hour of sleep as we turn back the clocks on Sunday,” said Acting State Fire Administrator Bryant D. Stevens, “but knowing that you have a working smoke alarm could help you sleep a little better and, more importantly, ensure that you wake up if a fire occurs.”

Working smoke alarms are essential in saving lives from fire. “You may have as little as three minutes to get out of your home or apartment before a fire becomes deadly,” said Stevens.

Working smoke alarms provide early warning of a fire and can provide extra time to escape safely. However, smoke alarms may not do their job if homeowners and renters don’t test them regularly to make sure that they are working.

From 2005-2009, approximately two-thirds of home fire deaths resulted from fires in properties without working smoke alarms, according to a report by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) titled “[Smoke Alarms in U.S. Home Fires.](#)” Many fire departments throughout New York State continue to respond to calls in homes each year where there is no working smoke alarm present.

“You are more than four times as likely to perish in a fire without a working smoke alarm,” said Paul D. Martin, OFPC’s Chief of Inspections and Investigations. “However, only half of those who own a smoke alarm say that they take the time to check it regularly.”

OFPC recommends that New Yorkers take the following steps to ensure the safety of themselves and their loved ones:

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- Install smoke alarms inside every bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of the home, including the basement.
- For the best protection, interconnect all smoke alarms so that when one sounds, they all sound.
- Replace all smoke alarms every 10 years or sooner if they do not respond properly when tested.
- Test all smoke alarms at least once a month by using the test button.

For more information on smoke alarms and other home fire safety tips, visit OFPC's website at www.dhSES.ny.gov/ofpc.

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