

NEWS from CPSC

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

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CPSC Consumer Hotline: (800) 638-2772

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Daylight-Saving Time Starts April 3

CPSC Reminds Americans to Change Smoke Alarm Batteries When Changing Clocks for Daylight-Saving Time

WASHINGTON, D.C.--The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reminds Americans to change their smoke alarm batteries when changing their clocks for Daylight-Saving Time this Sunday, April 3. While about 90 percent of U.S. households have smoke alarms installed, a CPSC survey estimated millions of those households, about 20 percent, do not have any working alarms.

"A working smoke alarm can save lives. It's that simple and that important," said CPSC Chairman Hal Stratton.

Each year, an estimated 2,850 people die in residential fires, 16,000 people are injured, and more than 353,500 residential fires are reported to fire departments. CPSC recommends changing smoke alarm batteries at least once a year and testing each smoke alarm every month to make sure it is working properly. Long-life smoke alarms with 10-year batteries have been available to consumers since 1995. These long-life alarms also should be tested monthly.

At least one smoke alarm should be placed on every level of the home. The most important location is near the bedrooms to provide an early warning to all sleeping occupants. A smoke alarm should also be placed inside every bedroom. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to properly install a smoke alarm.

The CPSC also urges families to plan escape routes, identify a family meeting place safely outside the home, and practice leaving their homes in the event of a fire. It is important to be aware of and remove any obstacles that may prevent a quick and safe evacuation, such as blocked exits or jammed or barred windows.

"A little bit of planning goes a long way," said Stratton. "Every family should develop a home fire escape plan and practice it at least twice a year with the entire household."

Stratton also warns that children may not wake up from the sound of a smoke alarm. "Parents should hold a fire drill during the night so they can assess their children's ability to awaken and respond appropriately," he said. "If children, or any family member, cannot awaken to or hear the smoke alarm, the escape plan should be adjusted to help all family members get out safely."

In addition to working smoke alarms, the CPSC recommends that every home have a carbon monoxide (CO) alarm near every sleeping area. Consumers also need to regularly test and replace batteries in CO alarms.

Send the link for this page to a friend! The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of serious injury or death from more than 15,000 types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. Deaths, injuries and property damage from consumer product incidents cost the nation more than \$700 billion annually. The CPSC is committed to protecting consumers and families from products that pose a fire, electrical, chemical, or mechanical hazard or can injure children. The CPSC's work to ensure the safety of consumer products - such as toys, cribs, power tools, cigarette lighters, and household chemicals - contributed significantly to the 30 percent decline in the rate of deaths and injuries associated with consumer products over the past 30 years.

To report a dangerous product or a product-related injury, call CPSC's hotline at (800) 638-2772 or CPSC's teletypewriter at (800)

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