



CITY OF LODI FIRE DEPARTMENT



FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU

SMOKE DETECTORS

According to the US Fire Administration (2017) fires in the home across the nation occur every 88 seconds. Every year about 3,000 people die (8 per day) in residential fires along with over 11,000 injured. Property loss is estimated at over 7 billion dollars. The peak time for a death from a home fire is between 2 a.m. and 4 a.m. when most people are asleep.

Eighty percent of fire deaths occur in a home without a working smoke detector. Fire deaths in homes without any smoke detectors made up half of those deaths. If fire occurs, working smoke detectors cut the risk of dying in a home fire nearly in half. Most fire fatalities in the home occur not from the fire itself, but from the smoke that is produced. Properly installed and maintained smoke detectors in the home are considered one of the best and least expensive means of providing an early warning of a potentially deadly fire. Smoke detectors save lives, prevent injuries, and minimize property damage by enabling residents to detect fires early in their development. If you are asleep when a fire starts, a working smoke detector may be the only chance you have of waking up. For your safety, the Lodi Fire Department wants your family and you to be knowledgeable regarding smoke detectors.

BUYING A SMOKE DETECTOR

- Average cost is \$10 to \$25 per detector.
- Detector must have an Underwriters Laboratories (UL) symbol or a Factory Mutual (FM) seal of approval on it along with a California State Fire Marshal approval.
- It should have a warning signal which warns you when bulbs or batteries need replacing.
- The smoke detector's alarm must be loud enough (85 decibel or louder) to wake a sleeping person behind a closed door. Special detectors are available for hard of hearing persons.

INSTALLING SMOKE DETECTORS

- Follow manufacture's instructions exactly in or on the box.
- Smoke detectors operate by electricity, battery, or by combination of both. Hard-wired detectors with battery back-up provide the safest, most reliable option.
- If you purchase a smoke detector to be connected to your home electrical system, you should have a qualified electrician install them. If your detector is solely battery powered, you can easily install them yourself with a screwdriver and a drill following the manufacturer's instructions.
- Smoke detectors need to be placed within 10 feet of sleeping areas as well inside each sleeping area. Smoke detectors should be mounted on the ceiling or high on the wall – remember smoke rises. Never place smoke detectors in the dead air space within 6 inches from a corner where a wall and ceiling meet.

- Never place a smoke detector near heating ducts or cold air returns.
- Avoid placing detectors near bathrooms with showers, cooking areas, furnace rooms or near fireplaces or wood-burning stoves.
- After installation, test detectors to assure they work, have everyone in your household know what they sound like and what to do if they hear that noise. Practice fire escape planning and determine a pre-set meeting place outside so everyone can be accounted for to assure no one reenters the home.

MAINTAINING SMOKE DETECTORS

- **NEVER** remove your battery if the alarm activates. Check to assure there are no hidden fires, and then fan the detectors with a newspaper until the alarm stops. If false alarms continue, try relocating your detector further from the kitchen or bathroom area and closer to the sleeping area.
- Change your battery annually when it's time to adjust your clocks for daylight saving time
- If your detector makes a "chirping" sound every 60 seconds or so, it is indicating the battery needs to be changed. This sound will last for a few days, but once the battery is dead you will have no protection at all.
- Clean the detectors face and screen by vacuuming it to remove any dust or cobwebs which could cause false alarms.
- Test your smoke detector **MONTHLY** by pushing the test button or using smoke from an extinguished match or candle. Never use a flame to test the detector.

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

- A carbon monoxide detector is required on each level of your home. One should be placed outside the sleep areas in order to alert you in your sleep.