Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives!

Do you know that the risk of dying from fires in homes without smoke alarms is twice as high as in homes that have working smoke alarms? You may also be surprised to know that over seventy-five percent of seniors who die each year in fires do not have working smoke alarms in their homes.

Smoke alarms are designed to wake occupants up if a fire starts in your home at night. When a fire spreads, the smoke alarm gives you time to get out. It is a dangerous risk to assume that the smell of smoke or the heat of the fire will wake you up. Just a few breaths of the smoke will endanger your life and by the time the heat wakes you up, your means of escape may be gone.

The single most important step you can take to save your life during a fire is to install a smoke alarm that suits your needs. Here are some practical smoke alarm tips.

- Place alarms at least outside of each sleeping area and on every floor of your home.
- Keep smoke alarms clean by vacuuming or having them vacuumed regularly.
- Test batteries monthly, and replace them every six months.
- Ask friends, family members, or building managers to install and test the batteries of a smoke alarm if it is hard to reach.
- If your smoke alarms are hardwired (connected to the electric circuitry of your home), make sure they are also equipped with battery backups.
- If you are hearing impaired, there are smoke alarms available that use strobe lights and vibrators in addition to sound.

Following these safety tips will help you stay safer in your home. Don’t forget to “be alarmed!”