



CITY OF RICHMOND
DEPARTMENT OF FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES
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MEDIA ADVISORY

CHANGE YOUR CLOCK, CHANGE YOUR BATTERY

USE THE EXTRA HOUR THIS WEEKEND TO REMIND FAMILY AND FRIENDS TO CHANGE THEIR SMOKE ALARM AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTOR BATTERIES AND MAKE A POSITIVE CHANGE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Richmond, VA--- Daylight-savings time ends Sunday, November 6, and the Richmond Fire Department encourages residents to use this time to change the batteries and test their smoke alarms. The department reminds residents that this one easy step can help save their lives and the lives of those around them. Residents are encouraged to use the extra hour they “gain” from daylight-savings time to change the batteries in their smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors, test the alarms and remind family, friends, neighbors and fellow community members to do the same. Communities nationwide witness tragic home fire deaths each year, but everyone can work together to help reduce the number of home fire fatalities. Non-working smoke alarms rob residents of the protective benefits home fire safety devices were designed to provide. The most commonly cited cause of non-working smoke alarms: worn or missing batteries.

“Eighty percent of child fire fatalities occur in homes without working smoke alarms. It’s a tragic statistic that could be reduced by adopting the simple habit of the Change Your Clock Change Your Battery program,” says Richmond Fire Marshal David Creasy. Changing smoke alarm batteries at least once a year, testing those alarms and reminding others to do the same are some of the simplest, most effective ways to reduce these tragic deaths and injuries. Additionally, the Richmond Fire Department recommends that smoke alarms in homes should be replaced every 10 years and having both ionization and photo electric smoke alarms are best to alert people to all types of home fires.

“The peak time for home fire fatalities is between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. when most families are sleeping,” says Fire Marshal Creasy. “Smoke alarm maintenance is a simple, effective way to reduce home fire deaths. Children and senior citizens are most at risk, and a working smoke alarm can give them the extra seconds they need to get out safely.” In addition, Fire Marshal Creasy recommends residents not only use the “extra” hour they save from the time change to test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors and to plan and practice escape routes, but also to make sure fellow neighbors and community members do the same. Families should also prepare a fire safety kit that includes working flashlights and fresh batteries.

Tragically, home fires injure and kill thousands each year. Those most at risk include:

- **Children** — Home fires kill 500 children ages 14 and under each year. Roughly three-quarters of child fire fatalities under age 15 occurred in homes without working smoke alarms.
- **Seniors** — Adults 75 and older are 2.8 times more likely to die in a home fire.
- **Low-Income Households** — Many low-income families are unable to afford batteries for their smoke alarms. These same households often rely on poorly installed, maintained or misused portable or area heating equipment — a main cause of fatal home fires.

Twenty-four years ago, *Energizer* and the International Association of Fire Chiefs recognized a disturbing trend that many home fire fatalities were taking place in homes without working smoke alarms. So through the years, the two have worked together along with thousands of fire departments nationwide on the *Change Your Clock Change Your Battery*® program to help reduce this number by reminding communities to check, change and test their smoke alarm batteries. A working smoke detector doubles your chance of surviving a home fire.

For more information about fire safety, call the Richmond Fire Department at 646-6640. If you need a free smoke alarm or just a replacement battery, call the Metro Richmond Smoke Alarm Hotline at 1-888-537-5967.