



OREGON

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Oregonians encouraged to check smoke alarms when changing their clocks

Oregon State Fire Marshal Randy Simpson urges residents to check their smoke alarms when changing their clock to Daylight Savings Time Sunday, March 14th. Many Oregonians have smoke alarms with ten-year batteries so the old saying, ‘Change your clock, change your batteries’ may not be correct for many households.

Smoke alarm laws in Oregon are different from most other states. Since 1999, law requires all ionization-only smoke alarms sold in the state to have a hush feature; and if an ionization-only smoke alarm is also solely battery-operated, it must also come with a 10-year lithium battery.

Although Oregon law does not require other types of alarms to have 10-year batteries, many smoke alarms are now sold with these long-life batteries. This means if a household member automatically follows the national slogan, they could be removing a perfectly good battery and replacing it at extra expense. However, some alarms with 10-year batteries are tamper proof. If you test the alarm and it doesn’t work, you will need to replace the entire alarm.

Checking your alarm includes testing it to be sure the battery is working, vacuuming the alarm to get rid of dust and cobwebs, and inspecting your alarm to determine if it is ten-years-old or older. If so, you should replace the entire alarm.

“Oregonians should first test their smoke alarm battery before automatically replacing it,” says Oregon State Fire Marshal Randy Simpson. “Long-life lithium batteries have a life span of up to 10 years and if your alarm has one of these batteries, it may not need replacing every time you change your clock. However, if your smoke alarms are ten years old or older you should replace them entirely,” says Simpson. “Also remember to test and vacuum your smoke alarm monthly.”

Working smoke alarms provide an early warning to a fire, allowing you vital minutes to escape and increasing your chances of surviving a fire. Additional safety tips:

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home and outside each sleeping area
- Replace smoke alarms 10 years old or older
- Hard-wired alarms (those wired directly into home electrical systems) should have battery back-ups
- Never disconnect or remove batteries from smoke alarms for other uses
- Make a home escape plan and practice it

For more smoke alarm and fire safety information, contact your local fire department or visit http://www.oregon.gov/OSP/SFM/CommEd_SA_Program.shtml.

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