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# CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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## **Hear the Beep Where You Sleep – Every Bedroom Needs a Working Smoke Alarm** *Celebrate Fire Prevention Week October 4-10, 2015*

**Sacramento** – Almost two-thirds of all home fire deaths occur in homes without a smoke alarm or no working smoke alarm. Working smoke alarms can reduce a person’s chance of dying in a home fire by half, and they provide the precious time needed to escape the home in the event of a fire. 50 percent of fire deaths result from fires reported at night between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. when most people are asleep. Home smoke alarms can alert people to a fire before it spreads, giving family and friends enough time to get out.

“In a fire, seconds count,” said California State Fire Marshal Tonya Hoover. “Think of your smoke alarm as the nose or eyes on the ceiling just smelling or seeing. When it smells or sees products of combustion like smoke, it alarms everyone at home to the danger.”

October 4-10 is National Fire Prevention Week, which is a good time to make sure all homes have working smoke alarms on every level, in every sleeping area, and in the hallways leading to the sleeping areas. These alarms should be hard-wired with a battery backup in case of a power outage. In California, new smoke alarms have a ten year long battery life which means no need to change the battery!

According to the latest National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) research, working smoke alarms cut the chance of dying in a fire in half. Meanwhile, three out of five fire deaths resulted from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms. So, what can residents do? Inspect all smoke alarms every month, clean them annually, and replace the entire smoke alarm every ten years. If an alarm “chirps,” warning the battery is low, replace the smoke alarm battery immediately if the alarm is not a long life battery smoke alarm.

If a smoke alarm sounds, crawl low and go outside to your meeting place. Everyone should be able to do this in less than two minutes. Once outside, call 911. Make sure that nobody goes back inside for anything.

This Fire Prevention Week CAL FIRE is asking all Californians to improve their own safety by having working smoke alarms in every bedroom and on every level of your home. “Make sure you, your family, and guests know what to do when the alarm sounds because it could be the sound that saves your lives,” said Chief Hoover.

For more information about smoke alarms and home fire safety, visit the CAL FIRE website at [www.fire.ca.gov](http://www.fire.ca.gov).

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