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When setting your clock, state fire marshal urges you to test your smoke alarms

Sunday, March 9th marks the beginning of Daylight Saving Time and serves as a good reminder for Oregonians to test their smoke alarms. The Office of State Fire Marshal is urging residents to test their smoke alarms before automatically changing the batteries.

“Smoke alarm technology has advanced and many now come with 10-year batteries or are tamper-proof,” said Interim State Fire Marshal Jim Walker. “So, I encourage residents to test their alarms before changing the battery.”

Oregon law requires ionization-only smoke alarms that are solely battery powered, come equipped with a hush feature and a 10-year battery. Because of this technology, the national slogan “*Change your clock, Change your battery*” may not apply to Oregon residents who have these ionization smoke alarms.

Other types of alarms are also being sold with either a 10-year battery or a standard-life battery.

“Ensuring you have working smoke alarms in your home is the single most important step you can take to increase your family’s safety from a home fire,” adds Walker. “Also, be sure to replace any smoke alarm that is 10 years old or older.”

To check your alarm properly we recommend you:

- 1) Push the test button to be sure the battery is working.
- 2) Follow the manufacturer’s instructions on regularly cleaning your alarms of dust and cobwebs.
- 3) Inspect your alarms to determine if they are 10 years old or older. Replace any smoke alarm 10 years old or older. Look for a date on the back of the alarm. If there is no date, your alarm is more than 10 years old and should be replaced.
- 4) When replacing batteries, follow the manufacturer’s instructions for the correct battery to use.

- 5) Always retest alarms after installing new batteries.
- 6) Replace any alarm that fails to operate after installing a new battery.

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

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, in each bedroom, and outside each sleeping area.
- Never disconnect or remove batteries from smoke alarms for other uses.
- Use the smoke alarm's hush feature to silence nuisance alarms.
- Make a home fire escape map and practice it with family members.

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

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