

# PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY



## Change Your Clock Change Your Battery

(NAPSA)—Thousands of homes and perhaps as many lives may have been saved by one simple idea.

It connects two unrelated activities—changing clocks from Daylight Saving Time and changing the batteries in home safety devices. You could change the batteries on important safety alarms such as smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors almost anytime, but in fact, many don't. It's a sad fact that approximately 80 percent of fatal home fire victims are children killed in homes without working smoke alarms. Hardly anyone neglects to change their clocks, so the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and Energizer® batteries joined forces 20 years ago to urge Americans through the Change Your Clock Change Your Battery® program to use the “extra hour” to change their smoke alarm and carbon monoxide detector batteries.

In 2007, the day to set your clocks back and change batteries in your smoke detectors is November 4.

“We have no way of knowing exactly how many lives and homes have been saved as a result,” said Chief Steven Westermann, president of the IAFC. “What we do know is that each year more Americans are replacing their batteries before they wear out and that makes each alarm safer.”

You can cut the odds of dying in a home fire nearly in half by adopting this simple habit. Most American homes—96 percent in fact—have smoke alarms. But approximately 19 percent of them have at least one nonworking smoke alarm, mostly due to worn out or missing batteries. The IAFC estimates that over 25 million homes are at risk.



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The five most common reasons home smoke alarms do not function properly are:

- Battery is not replaced in a timely fashion.
- Battery is removed due to unwanted activation from situations such as cooking fumes.
- Battery is removed due to a “chirping sound,” which actually indicates the battery needs to be replaced.
- Alarms and detectors are not cleaned regularly.
- Alarm is aged and may contain outdated parts or technology.

“Many people mistakenly believe they will either see the flames or smell the smoke when a fire breaks out,” Chief Westermann said. “But most fire fatalities happen while families are asleep. Smoke by itself doesn't provide a wake-up call, but a working smoke alarm does.” The same holds true with carbon mo-

noxide since it is a colorless, odorless gas.

In addition, November can bring severe weather, a time when power outages are more frequent. Avoid using candles, which are often the cause of home fires. Use flashlights instead. Daylight Saving Time is a good time to check those batteries, as well as the batteries in carbon monoxide detectors, suggest the experts at Energizer.

The IAFC is a nonprofit association representing nearly 13,000 chief fire officers and emergency services leaders worldwide. Its members are the world's leading experts in fire fighting, emergency medical services, terrorism response, hazardous materials spills, natural disasters, search and rescue and public safety legislation.

You can learn more about fire safety online at [www.iafc.org](http://www.iafc.org) and [www.energizer.com](http://www.energizer.com).