

“CHANGE YOUR CLOCKS, CHANGE YOUR BATTERIES”

With daylight savings time approaching, the Greenville Fire Department urges you to install a new battery in each smoke detector of your home when you “spring ahead” the time on your clocks. It has been proven that a *working* smoke detector is the single most effective tool in surviving a house fire.

In a telephone survey conducted in the US 96%-97% of household have at least one smoke alarm, about 53% of all reported house fires did the smoke alarm operate properly. “This [negligence] is to blame for the majority of fire-related deaths and injuries in the U.S.” Research provided by the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA), and supported by the statistics from local fire departments nationwide, shows a direct correlation between survival in a fire and the presence of *working* smoke detectors. According to the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) “detectors equipped with batteries checked regularly and changed every year **double** the odds for survival.”

The widespread acceptance and availability of smoke detectors in the early 1980s greatly increased the nation’s progress in decreasing fire-related deaths and injuries. However, in the 1990s that progress slowed dramatically; and battery neglect is believed to have played a leading role in this disturbing trend. To aid our local community in avoiding unnecessary fire-related tragedies, the Greenville Fire Department offers the following suggestions:

- Install at least one working smoke detector (with a fresh battery) on each level of your home.
- Because smoke rises, smoke detectors should be placed on the ceiling or at the highest point on the wall.
- Ensure each detector in your home is operating properly by pressing the “test” button at least once a month.
- Never remove the battery from your smoke detector except to install a new one.

In 37 % of fire related deaths there was no smoke detector present in the home. The risk of a death happening in a fire is cut in half when there is a working smoke alarm present. The City of Greenville Fire Department will provide and install a free smoke detector and CO detector to those in need. Stop at the Fire Department office Monday-Thursday 8:00- 4:30 P.M. Friday 8:00-1:00 P.M. to fill a request form.