

# Cy-Fair Fire Department Stresses the Importance of Smoke Alarms

*October is Fire Prevention Month. Daniel Anderson of the CFFD shares tips on properly working smoke alarms.*

HOUSTON, TX, UNITED STATES, October 23, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- While fire safety is important all year, Fire Prevention Month is the perfect time for a refresher on lifesaving steps to protect people and homes. One of the most important actions is to make sure homes have working smoke alarms. "Smoke alarms serve as the first line of defense in the event of a house fire, giving families the crucial time to escape safely," says Daniel Anderson of the CFFD.

Smoke alarms are so critical that this year's Fire Prevention Week (October 6-12) theme is, "Smoke alarms: Make them work for you!™" According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), more than half of home fire deaths happen in homes with either no smoke alarms or smoke alarms that didn't work.

Here, Anderson shares safety tips on the correct use and management of smoke alarms:

Cover all the bases. Smoke alarms should be installed on the ceiling or high on the wall in every bedroom and outside each sleeping area. If the smoke alarm is installed on the wall, make sure it isn't covered by curtains or any other obstruction. "If a home has multiple levels," says Anderson, "smoke alarms should be installed on each one, including the attic. Follow the manufacturer's instructions when installing them."

All for one, one for all. Interconnected smoke alarms offer the best protection—especially for people who sleep with their bedroom door shut. When one sounds, they all sound. Every second counts during a house fire, and this may provide more time to get out.

Choose an alarm that is listed by a qualified testing laboratory. There are two common types of smoke alarms: ionization and photoelectric. Photoelectric alarms are more responsive to smoldering fires, and ionization alarms are more responsive to flaming fires. "It's recommended to have both types or alarms that combine both technologies for the best protection," shares Anderson. "For fewer false alarms, photoelectric are the best for kitchens and bathrooms."

Test smoke alarms regularly. All smoke alarms should be tested once a month. This can be done by pressing the test button. If the alarm doesn't sound, it's time to replace the batteries (or the

alarm itself). In addition to testing, smoke alarms should also be cleaned regularly. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions and clean carefully.

Make the proper replacements. Smoke alarms should be replaced every ten years, even if they appear to still be working properly. Batteries should be replaced every six months. If the alarm chirps, then the batteries should be replaced right away.

"Some smoke alarms have long-life batteries that are non-replaceable," shares Anderson. "These are designed to work for up to ten years and don't need their batteries changed every six months. However, if the alarm chirps, the whole smoke alarm needs to be replaced."

Ensure smoke alarms meet the needs of all in the household. For those who are deaf or hearing-impaired, typical smoke alarms may not be reliable to alert them of danger. There are other options available, such as smoke alarms that have strobe lights that flash when the alarm sounds.

"People should research options and different products to find the best fit for their household," says Anderson. "It's imperative that everyone is alerted in the event of a fire. Again, make sure these devices are listed by a qualified testing laboratory."

"Working smoke alarms save lives, but only if they are installed correctly and maintained regularly," says Anderson. "Every family should make sure their home is equipped with functional smoke alarms in the right places."

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About CFFD:

The Cy-Fair Fire Department (CFFD) provides professional fire and emergency medical services to the citizens of Northwest Harris County, Texas. From its beginnings in the late 1950s, the Cy-Fair FD is now one of the largest, busiest combination fire departments in the United States, with over 38,000 emergency responses each year. CFFD covers the 164-square-mile area of Harris County Emergency Services District #9 (HCESD9) in the unincorporated part of Northwest Harris County. Responding from 13 stations strategically located throughout the territory, the 550-plus men and women of the fire department are among the best trained and equipped firefighters, emergency medical technicians (EMTs), and dispatchers in the nation.

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