



Gwinnett County Government Fire and Emergency Services

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SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES

Smoke alarms save lives! This is a strong but accurate statement about this easily overlooked sentry in your home. Did you know that you can't smell smoke when you are asleep? It's true; in fact, most people who die in residential fires never wake up and pass away from inhaling smoke and heat. Today's smoke detectors do the smelling for you by detecting smoke particles before they can get to you. Some even detect heat.

Smoke Alarm FAQs

I saw different types of smoke alarms in the store. Which one should I get?

Ionization smoke detectors are more responsive to flaming fires, and photoelectric detectors are generally more responsive to fires that begin with a long period of smoldering. According to the National Fire Protection Association, both types have advantages that may be critical to life safety in some situations. The best protection is to buy a unit that incorporates both types of smoke alarm technologies in one. Studies show that dual-sensor smoke detectors activate faster than ones with a single sensor!

Where should I put smoke detectors?

The Gwinnett County Department of Fire and Emergency Services advises residents to place at least one smoke detector on each level of the house, especially outside of bedrooms and at the top of staircase landings. These areas give you the earliest alert about a possible fire in your home.

How often should smoke alarms be checked?

As a rule, you should check your detectors at least monthly and change the batteries twice a year. A good way to remember is to change the batteries in your smoke alarms when you change your clocks for daylight saving time. Remember to regularly maintain your detector by keeping it dust free and testing it as part of your home safety plan.

I think the smoke detectors are original to my house. Do smoke alarms last forever?

Smoke alarms have manufacture dates printed on them, and no detector should be used for more than 10 years. Smoke alarms don't last forever, so be sure to replace the units as years go by.

About Gwinnett County Fire and Emergency Services

Our mission is to save lives and protect property, while delivering the highest quality of service by holding the principles of truth, trust, respect, and unity. We offer public education classes, including home safety planning. Sign up today. Contact us at fireprograms@gwinnettcounty.com.

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