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Time change Nov. 2 means it's time to change those batteries

Approximately 65 percent of home-fire deaths result from fires in the home with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms. Smoke alarms can save lives – but only when they work. A properly installed and maintained smoke alarm will provide an early warning signal to your household allowing the chance to escape.

According to Fire Marshal Jane Ross, these safety tips could save lives:

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home. For extra safety, install smoke alarms both inside and outside sleeping areas, especially if you sleep with your bedroom door closed.
- Make a habit of replacing the batteries in your smoke alarm when you change your clocks for the time change. Make sure to mark November 2 on your calendar.
- Keep smoke alarms clean. Dust can interfere with how your smoke alarm works. Regularly vacuum over your smoke alarm.
- The “chirping” noise you may hear could mean your battery is low. Replace the battery immediately.
- Replace your smoke alarms about every ten years. They do wear out, so write the purchase date with a marker on the back of your smoke alarm then you'll know when it should be replaced.

Weather radios are also as important as smoke alarms in saving lives. “One only needs to look at the daily news to know it is important to be prepared to react when severe weather threatens,” said Ed McCrane, Emergency Management chief. “Tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, etc., can strike in a moment’s notice and quick action must be taken to protect families and homes from harm. Change those batteries in smoke alarms and weather radios when it’s time to change the clocks.”

If you cannot afford a smoke alarm or for information on smoke alarms, contact the Sarasota County Fire Prevention Office at 941-861-5000. This program is available to keep you safe.

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