



COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF THE FIRE MARSHAL

Date:

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

The West Hartford Fire Department is committed to fire prevention and community safety. Reaching out to the people we serve is important because the information we offer may result in a fire being prevented.

You hear from the West Hartford Fire Department twice a year reminding you to change the batteries in your smoke alarms. We'd also like to inform you that every smoke alarm has an expiration date. While the life span of each device may differ, manufacturers suggest that you replace the whole unit every 10 years. The hardware that we don't see like the circuit board, the light source, and the actual detector itself, is more likely to fail after then. Also in that 10 year time frame, the accumulation of dust and dirt may impact how reliable your smoke alarm might be.

Determining whether your smoke alarm needs to be replaced is a matter of checking the date of manufacture. If your smoke alarm is already mounted, remove it from the wall or ceiling and look closely for the date (which may be stamped or printed) usually located on the back plate of the alarm. If your smoke alarm needs to be replaced, consider that there are options to choose from:

- An alarm with a sealed 10 year battery means there's no replacing the battery during the life of the smoke alarm.
- Combination alarms that detect both smoke and carbon monoxide (which is a colorless and odorless poisonous gas) allow for protection against two threats.
- For our neighbors in the deaf and hard of hearing community, there are smoke alarms that have strobe lights, vibration alerts and ones that offer a mix of lower pitches.

Whichever you choose, please test all of your smoke alarms once a month to be sure they are in good working order. Remember that smoke alarms alert you in the earliest stages of a fire which saves lives and minimizes damage to you and your home. So, please take the time to protect your family in your home by choosing and maintaining a smoke alarm that suits your household's needs.

Thank you for joining us in our effort to keep our community safe through fire prevention.

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