



# Share the Wellness Tip

August 23, 2013

## Up in Smoke

An estimated 16 million homes in the United States have smoke alarms with missing or dead batteries. When smoke alarms fail to operate, it is usually because batteries are missing, disconnected or dead. Almost one-quarter of the smoke alarm failures was due to dead batteries.

Don't take any chances. Make plans to check your batteries once or twice a year. A good time to change your batteries is the change to and from Daylight Saving Time each fall and spring.

A working smoke alarm can double your chances of survival. Install one on every level of your home, including the basement. Alarms should be installed on the ceiling, or six to eight inches below the ceiling on the wall. Make sure to test them monthly, clean them, and replace the batteries at least once a year. Smoke detectors themselves should be replaced after 10 years, or as recommended by the manufacturer.

Also, you might want to consider automatic fire sprinklers. Keep in mind that a smoke alarm can only alert the occupants to a fire in the house, but a sprinkler system can help to contain or extinguish a fire.

Sources: U.S. Fire Administration; National Fire Protection Association

