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CITY OF MUSCATINE PRESS RELEASE

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TIME CHANGE THIS WEEKEND –TIME TO CHECK DETECTORS

Changing, testing smoke, carbon monoxide detectors key to surviving a fire

MUSCATINE, Iowa – This weekend marks the start of Daylight Saving Time (DST) and the Muscatine Fire Department reminds residents that this is also a good time to change the batteries in their smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, to test the alarms, and to remind family and friends to do the same.

If you do not have both of these detectors ... purchase and install them.

Worn or missing batteries are the most commonly cited reason for non-working smoke alarms, but changing smoke alarm batteries at least once a year, testing those alarms, and reminding others to do the same is the simplest and most effective way to reduce injury or death from fire.

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) also recommends replacing smoke alarms in homes every 10 years and those that actually speak warnings are more effective in saving lives than those alarms that just beep.

“Studies have shown that children, especially, will sleep through an alarm that beeps because it sounds a lot like an alarm clock,” Mike Hartman, Assistant Fire Chief for the City of Muscatine.

“The alarms that actually speak to you have been shown to greatly increase a person’s ability to escape a fire.”

The Fire Department also recommends photoelectric alarms with a 10-year lithium battery and to mark the date of installation on the detectors.

Carbon monoxide detectors are required in Iowa homes, apartment buildings, and new construction projects. They should be replaced every seven to eight years according to the IAFC. Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless, and tasteless gas that is harmful when breathed because it displaces oxygen in the blood and deprives the heart, brain, and other vital organs of oxygen. Carbon monoxide poisoning (breathing in large amounts of CO) can cause serious tissue damage, loss of consciousness, or suffocation in minutes without any warning.

The death rate per 1,000 reported home fires was more than twice as high in homes that did not have any working smoke alarms (12.3 deaths per 1,000 fires), either because no smoke alarm was present or an alarm was present but did not operate), as it was in homes with working smoke alarms (5.7 per 1,000 fires). Smoke & carbon monoxide alarms are life saving device, and having working smoke & carbon monoxide alarm dramatically increases your chance of survival from a fire or carbon monoxide emergency.

Although it seems like a hassle, it's better to get into the practice of changing your smoke/co detector batteries when you change your clocks, than to wait until the telltale beeping of a dying battery at 2 o'clock in the morning, which many times ends up in the removal of the battery or the detector all together, thus rendering the detector useless.

Fires & carbon monoxide emergencies are real and very scary. A working smoke detector works around the clock and alerts you and your loved ones to a fire or carbon monoxide emergency even while you are asleep, When the alarm sounds you should "Get out & Stay Out", then call "911" and advise the MUSCOM dispatcher of the problem.

If you need assistance changing or testing your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors, please contact the Muscatine Fire Department.

Read article on Carbon Monoxide Detector requirements [here](#).