



**Northern Ireland
Fire & Rescue Service**

Protecting Our Community

COMMUNITY INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. 29

SMOKE ALARMS

A smoke alarm is a warning device that detects smoke at the earliest stages of a fire; this gives you vital extra time to escape. Smoke alarms are low cost items; you can get them from supermarkets or high street stores. If you are buying a smoke alarm, consider one with a 10 year battery.

Where do I fit a smoke alarm?

- You should fit a minimum of one smoke alarm on every level of your home, ideally on the hallway or landing ceilings;
- The smoke alarm should be sited as per the manufacturer's instructions;
- It's better to install a heat alarm in your kitchen rather than a smoke alarm;
- When positioning a smoke alarm, make sure you will be able to hear the alarm at night with the bedroom door closed; and
- Obviously the more you install, the better cover you will have.

Testing your smoke alarm

- Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service recommends that you test your smoke alarm once a week;
- Test the alarm by pressing the test button on it; if you can't reach then get a family member or neighbour to help or use a broom handle; and
- Test your smoke alarm every Tuesday.

Maintain your smoke alarm

- Vacuum around your smoke alarm or wipe with a damp cloth once a month to stop a build-up of dust; this should help prevent false alarms;
- If your smoke alarm has a 9 volt battery, replace it every year; NEVER remove the battery or take your alarm off its back plate unless it's to replace the battery or install a new alarm.
- If you live in rented accommodation contact the landlord to report any smoke alarm faults;
- If you live in Housing Executive property contact 0344 892 0900 to report any smoke alarm faults; and
- If your smoke alarm is connected to the mains, contact a qualified electrician to repair any faults.

Tenants and occupiers should also be aware of the main causes of fire in the home; have a night-time routine to prevent fires from starting and have a fire escape plan for the property in the event of a fire. Remember, only a working smoke alarm will alert you to a fire.

Should a fire break out in the property, get out if safe to do so, stay out and dial 999 and ask for Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service.

For further information phone NIFRS HQ 028 9266 4221 or visit www.nifrs.org



#STOPfire