



Travis County Fire Marshal's Office

Hershel Lee, Fire Marshal
P. O. Box 1748, Austin, Texas 78767
(512) 854-4621, fax (512) 854-6471

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Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives: Test Yours Every Month!

This year's National Fire Prevention Week, October 5-11, focuses on the importance of properly functioning smoke alarms in the home. The Travis County Fire Marshal's Office reminds us that people face the greatest risk from fire in their homes, and working smoke alarms cut the risk of dying in home fires in half.

"In the event of a house fire, working smoke alarms give us precious time to get out safely," said Travis County Fire Marshal Hershel Lee. "Test your alarm batteries monthly by simply pressing the test button; replace batteries annually, and completely replace smoke alarms every 10 years."

The Fire Marshal's Office recommends:

- Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room, in the common area outside each separate sleeping area and on every level of the home. (Alarms are available for people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.)
- Test all smoke alarms monthly. A single chirping noise or a continuous chirp with the test button pressed indicates the alarm is working.
- Replace smoke alarms every 10 years or before 10 years, if they malfunction.
- Have and practice a home fire escape plan with all members of the family to increase fire survival chances.

Home fires killed more than 2,300 people in the United States in 2012, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), and fire departments responded to more than 365,000 home fires that year. Unfortunately, three out of five home fire deaths result from fires in properties without working smoke alarms. When smoke alarms should have operated but did not, the cause was usually because batteries were missing, disconnected or dead.

For more information, please visit the Travis County Fire Marshal's website at www.traviscountytexas.gov/fire_marshal or go to www.firepreventionweek.org.

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Submitted by: Travis County Emergency Services PIO Lisa Block, 512-854-7954.