



## Smoke Detectors – Save Lives at Work & Home!

October 5<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> is "National Fire Prevention Week". (Article By Jody Warner, Cambridge Risk Control Supervisor)

Fire fighters have always heard the simple explanation, "The smoke detector woke me up. I was able to wake the rest of the family and get them out just ahead of the fire." At home and at work, a smoke detector is the best early fire detection device available to the average homeowner. Here are some answers to questions commonly asked about smoke detectors.

### 2003 Dates To Remember:

#### January:

Plan Your Safety Training Now!  
Call Jody For Training Ideas!  
312-381-8208

#### February:

9–15, National Child Passenger Safety Week

#### March:

16–20 Poison Prevention Week  
Workplace Eye Safety Month  
Save Your Vision Month

#### April:

Sports Eye Safety Month  
6–12 Intl Building Safe Week  
7–11 Workzone Aware. Week  
21-25 Window Safety Week  
21-25 Playground Safety Week

#### May:

Clean Air Month  
Melanoma Awareness Month  
Electrical Safety Month  
17-23 Safe Boating Week  
18-24 National EMS Week  
19-26 Buckle Up America Week

#### June:

NATIONAL SAFETY MONTH

#### July:

Eye Injury Prevention Month

#### August:

Prepare Your Winter Safety Training!

#### September:

5-12 National Safety Council Congress & Expo – Chicago, IL  
21-27 Farm Safety/Health Week

#### October:

5-11 Nat. Fire Prevention Week  
20-24 School Bus Safety Week  
20-24 Radon Action Week

#### November:

Take advantage of the weather and do your classroom training!

#### December:

"3D Month" - Nation Drunk & Drugged Driving Prevention Month

**How much does a smoke detector cost?** Residential smoke detector can be purchased at most retail stores (Walmart, K Mart, Target) for prices ranging from \$5 to \$20. Commercial grade smoke detectors can be obtained from any fire safety contractor and will likely tie into your existing alarm system.

**What kind of smoke detector should I buy?** Both battery powered and home electrical current powered smoke detectors do a great job. Make sure the one you choose has been tested by a nationally recognized testing laboratory. (UL – Underwriters Laboratories, etc.)

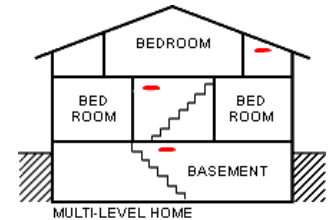
**How many smoke detectors do I need?** There should be at least one detector on every level of the house except attics, unless the attic space is used for sleeping. Additional detectors will increase the chance of early detection.

#### How do I mount a smoke detector in my home?

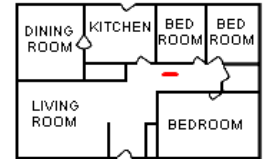
Smoke detectors should be placed near bedrooms either on the ceiling --at least 6 to 12 inches away from a wall--or on the wall, 6--12 inches down from the ceiling. This allows the detector to sense the smoke as it approaches the sleeping area.

**What maintenance do smoke detectors require?** Test the detector at least monthly by pushing the test button. Once a year vacuum the dust from alarm air vents. Battery operated detectors should have the battery replaced each year or when the low battery warning sounds. Select a memorable date such as a holiday or a family birthday to remind you to replace the batteries in your smoke detectors at that time – how about **National Fire Prevention Week?**

**Is there anything else I should do with my smoke detector?** YES! Hold regular fire drills so everyone will know what to do if your detector ever alerts you of an emergency. Also - **Never** remove a battery from a smoke detector to prevent it from sounding – cooking, cleaning, smoking, etc. The battery is often forgotten and the detector is useless!



MULTI-LEVEL HOME



SINGLE-LEVEL HOME

### Fire Drills

Fires can happen anywhere. A fire in a large building creates an enormous risk to everyone.

Other reasons for evacuating buildings include natural gas leaks, earthquakes, hazardous material spills, terrorist activity and storms. Knowing what to do is the key to surviving an emergency. Conducting regular fire drills will give you the knowledge and confidence to evacuate a building safely.

**PLAN** your fire drills – know 2 ways out and also that you have a common meeting place for everyone.

**PRACTICE** – your fire drills often. You should practice your fire drills no less than once per year. More frequently, if you can.

(Article By Jody Warner, Cambridge Loss Control Supervisor)



### Fire Extinguishers

A portable fire extinguisher can save lives and property by putting out a small fire or containing it until the fire department arrives; but portable extinguishers have limitations. Because fire grows and spreads so rapidly, the number one priority for residents is to get out.

Use a portable fire extinguisher when the fire is confined to a small area, such as a wastebasket, and is not growing; everyone has exited the building; the fire department has been called or is being called; and the room is not filled with smoke.

Remember the word **PASS**:

**P**ull the pin.

**A**im at the base of the fire.

**S**queeze the lever slowly and evenly.

**S**weep the nozzle from side-to-side.

(Article By Jody Warner, Cambridge Loss Control Supervisor)





## NFPA Fact Sheet - Home Fires

- In 2001, there were 383,500 home fires in the United States, resulting in 3,110 deaths, 15,200 injuries and \$5.5 billion in direct property damage.
- Overall, home fires have declined fairly steadily since 1978 and were down by nearly half in 2001 (48%). Only 1999 had a lower home fire death total (2,895) in the past quarter-century.
- Nationwide, there was a home fire death every 170 minutes.
- The statistics below are based on annual averages for the five-year period from 1994 through 1998:
  - Half of all home fire deaths resulted from fires that were reported between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. Only one-fourth of the home fires occur during these hours.
  - January was the peak month for home fire deaths. February ranked second, and December was third.
  - Smoking was the leading cause of home fire deaths overall, but in the months of December, January and February, smoking and heating equipment caused similar shares of fire deaths. Cooking was the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries year-round.
  - Although children five and under make up about 9% of the country's population, they accounted for 17% of the home fire deaths, assigning them a risk twice the national average. Adults 65 and older also face a risk twice the average, while people 85 and older have a risk that is almost four-and-a-half times more than average.
  - Only one-fifth of the home fire deaths from 1989-1998 were caused by fires in which a smoke alarm was present and operated.
  - Most fatal fires kill one or two people. In 2001, 22 home fires killed five or more people. These 22 fires resulted in 125 deaths, accounting for 4% of all home fire deaths.\*\*

(\* From national estimates reported to U.S. municipal fire departments based on NFIRS and NFPA survey. Excludes fires reported only to federal or state agencies or industrial fire brigades.) (\*\* From "2001 Catastrophic Fires" *NFPA Journal*, September/October 2002.)

Cambridge Risk Control Dept.:  
175 West Jackson, Suite 1000  
Chicago, IL 60604  
phone 312-381-8072  
facsimile 312-381-9811

Mark Almburg,  
Risk Control Manager  
312-381-8240  
[mark\\_almburg@cisqi.com](mailto:mark_almburg@cisqi.com)

John Tahlier  
Risk Control Supervisor, Midwest  
608-837-7602  
[john\\_tahlier@cisqi.com](mailto:john_tahlier@cisqi.com)

Steve Rusicka  
Risk Control Supervisor, East  
800-686-2762 x416  
[steve\\_rusicka@cisqi.com](mailto:steve_rusicka@cisqi.com)

Charles Martinek  
Risk Control Supervisor, West  
515-224-6805 x272  
[charles\\_martinek@cisqi.com](mailto:charles_martinek@cisqi.com)

Jody Warner  
Risk Control Supervisor  
Training & Technical Services  
(Web & Newsletter)  
312-381-8208  
[jody\\_warner@cisqi.com](mailto:jody_warner@cisqi.com)

### Fire Protection Specialists respond to Frequently Asked Questions about High-Rise Fires – (FAQ)

#### Is there a requirement for building owners/operators to hold regular emergency drills for occupants?

Although not mandated for all buildings, NFPA 101, *Life Safety Code*, requires that workplaces, healthcare facilities, educational institutions and other occupancies provide evacuation/relocation plan information and routinely schedule and hold drills when practicable.

#### If the neighboring high-rise is one fire, should my building evacuate?

Not during a typical fire. You should remain vigilant and determine if there is any change in conditions that could result in your building being threatened by the adjacent fire. In such cases, emergency personnel have adequate time to order evacuations of other buildings.

(For more information on fire safety, call Cambridge Risk Control or go to [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org))

# Fire Safety Resource Center

### - It's Good To Know - Fire safety facts!

Fire can engulf a home in 6 minutes.

Candles start over 4% of all reported home fires.

In 1999, grills caused 1,500 structure fires and 4,200 outdoor fires in or on home properties causing \$29.8 million in damage.

Smoke detectors save lives!

### Helpful Websites:

Fire Safety – [nfpa.org](http://nfpa.org)

US Fire Administration

[www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov)

Residential Fire Safety Institute

[www.firesafefhome.org](http://www.firesafefhome.org)

Smokey The Bear !

[www.smokeybear.com](http://www.smokeybear.com)

### Home Safety Tip:

Change your smoke detector battery each time it changes to and from daylight saving time.

Detector batteries are inexpensive compared to what they protect!