

For Immediate Release
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Chirping is for Birds, Not Smoke Alarms *Check them this weekend as you move your clocks forward*

When Ohioans move their clocks forward one hour this Sunday, they should also change the batteries in one of their home's most important safety devices – their smoke alarms.

Along with making sure all smoke alarms have a fresh set of batteries, checking the expiration date is crucial in early fire detection.

“We continue to lose more than 100 Ohioans every year to fires, often where there are no working alarms present,” State Fire Marshal Jeff A. Hussey said. “These life-saving devices are often the first warning sign of a fire, so it's incredibly imperative to have an adequate number of working smoke alarms in your home.”

To find out how old a smoke alarm is, as well as its expiration date, simply look on the back of the alarm where the date of manufacture is marked. The smoke alarm should be replaced 10 years from that date (*not* from the date of purchase). Any alarms with a manufacture date of March 10, 2009 or earlier should be replaced.

For the greatest protection, install a smoke alarm on every level of the home and inside and outside of each sleeping area. Ohioans are also encouraged to develop an escape plan with two ways out and make sure every family member knows what to do and where to meet outside if the smoke alarm sounds. Taking the time to practice both a primary and secondary escape plan is vital for knowing what to do if a real emergency were to occur.

Additionally, Ohioans should make a habit of changing the batteries in their smoke detectors at least twice a year – at the beginning and end of daylight savings time.

Marshal Hussey offers these additional tips:

- Test smoke alarms at least once each month to ensure they are working properly.
- Vacuum the dust from inside the detector at least once every year.
- Never “borrow” a smoke detector's battery for another use.

In addition to Ohioans making sure they have functioning smoke alarms, conducting homeowners or renters insurance review with an agent is just as important.

A recent national study revealed 56 percent of homeowners haven't reviewed their policies in more than a year. Ohioans should discuss different deductible levels and the amount of coverage to ensure adequate financial protection.

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Also, creating a home inventory to assist in receiving accurate value from a potential loss and streamline the claim filing experience. The myHome Scr.APP.book inventory app and a paper inventory checklist on the Ohio Department of Insurance website are available for free [here](#).

Ohioans with insurance questions can call the Ohio Department of Insurance at 1-800-686-1526.

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