

It's Fire Prevention Week and this year the National Fire Protection Association has selected the theme "Fire Alarms Saves Lives, Test Yours Every Month". The Moultrie Fire Department also encourages you to install and test smoke alarms in your home. Working smoke alarms double the chance of surviving a home fire. Approximately 80% of fire victims will die or be injured in their own home. If your fire alarms were provided and installed by the Moultrie Fire Department remember that they are equipped with long life batteries and you may not need to change the battery but you still need to test them monthly. Since most fires occur at night while we are sleeping a working smoke alarm may be the only alarm that will awake us and warn of the danger of a fire in the home. Contrary to popular belief you can't smell smoke and the deadly gasses will only put you into deeper sleep. You generally have less than 3 minutes to escape a growing fire and time is of great importance. The very young and very old stand 3 times the risk of losing their lives in a fire emergency. We also recommend the following:

- 1) As a minimum install working smoke alarms on each floor level of your home, and outside each separate sleeping area. For greater protection we recommend installing alarms in each bedroom.
- 2) Install smoke alarms in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions on the ceiling or high on a wall.
- 3) Test your smoke alarms in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations but as a minimum of once each month.
- 4) If you hear a chirping sound that means the battery is dying and needs to be replaced. We recommend you change your batteries every six months. An easy time to remember to do this is when we change the time in the spring and fall. "Change Your Clock Change Your Batteries". Never remove the battery from your smoke alarm. Please remember that Moultrie Fire Department provided detectors have long life batteries and do not need to be changed this often.
- 5) Clean the outside of your smoke alarm on a quarterly basis by using a vacuum or rag to wipe the outside of your alarm off to prevent dust build up. Do not remove the alarm cover.
- 6) Install smoke alarms a minimum of 36 inches away from any air vent, door or fan. Air drafts can prevent smoke from reaching the smoke alarm.
- 7) Do not install smoke alarms in unoccupied attic spaces.
- 8) Smoke alarms have a working life of 10 years and after 10 years are only about 30% effective. If your alarms are over 10 years old we recommend they be replaced.

Remember smoke alarms can help protect you 7 days a week 24 hours a day but only if they are properly installed and tested. Have a home escape plan for your home where every family member knows two ways out of each room or area.

The Moultrie Fire Department has a free Home Inspection Checklist available on the City of Moultrie Website. We encourage you to go to our website at moultriega.com under the City Services tab please go to the Fire Department tab and get this form and conduct a home inspection to make your home fire safe.