



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Families need to test smoke alarms

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Fire Prevention Week is Oct. 3- 9, and this year's theme, as designated by the National Fire Protection Association, is "Test Your Smoke Alarms."

According to the association, roughly 70 percent of home fire deaths result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms, or no working smoke alarms. Because families may have as little time as two minutes to escape, it is essential that every family member is able to recognize the sound of a smoke alarm and know how to escape safely.

"Basic smoke alarms are relatively inexpensive and can be purchased at your local hardware store," said Amanda Calhoun, program manager for the Alabama Smoke Alarm Initiative at the Alabama Department of Public Health. "There are also special smoke alarms targeted for young children, older adults, and people with disabilities."

The following tips can help protect your family.

- * Install at least one smoke alarm per every level of the home, including basements.
- * Place smoke alarms within 10 feet of bedrooms as well as inside the bedroom if you sleep with the doors closed.
- * Test your alarm monthly and replace the battery yearly.
- * Replace alarm units that are 10 years and older.

It is also important to create a home fire escape plan. The plan should include knowing two ways out of every room, designating a safe meeting place, and evacuating children, elderly and disabled family members. Families should practice the escape plan at least two times per year.

"Practicing may cause family members to respond quicker during the event of an actual fire emergency because they are so familiar with the fire escape plan," said Ms. Calhoun.

For more information on fire safety, please visit the Alabama Department of Public Health's Web site at www.adph.org/injuryprevention.

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