



OFFICE OF THE ILLINOIS STATE FIRE MARSHAL

JB Pritzker, Governor
Michele L. Pankow, State Fire Marshal

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Spring Forward Safely: Test, Inspect & Replace Smoke and CO Alarms as Daylight Saving Time Begins

In 2025, over 3200 Illinois homes and 7,800 residents are now protected by new smoke alarms

Springfield, Ill- The Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal (OSFM) reminds Illinoisans to test, inspect, and replace broken or expired smoke/CO alarms in their homes with new 10-year sealed battery alarms while they change the clocks this weekend as Daylight Saving Time begins at 2 AM Sunday, March 8.

“Working smoke alarms save lives—the key word is working. As you change your clocks this weekend, take a few minutes to test all smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in your home, check their expiration dates, and replace any that are broken or more than 10 years old,” **said Illinois State Fire Marshal Michele Pankow**. “A functioning smoke alarm gives you and your family the early warning needed to escape safely in the event of a fire. While you’re at it, take some time to review and practice your family’s fire escape plan.”

The time change serves as a bi-annual reminder to test all smoke and CO alarms in your home. If you find an alarm that is not working or is expired, replace the alarm immediately with a new 10-year sealed battery alarm. Review your fire-escape plan with your family and hold a drill to practice your plan.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reports that nearly three out of five (59%) home fire deaths in the United States occur in homes with no smoke alarms or smoke alarms that failed to operate. More than two out of five (43%) of home fire deaths result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms present. Homes with working smoke alarms experience a death rate about 60% lower than homes with no alarms or no working alarms.

According to statistics from the Be Alarmed! Smoke Alarm Installation Program, in 2025, 68% of pre-existing smoke alarms in homes receiving new 10-year sealed battery smoke alarms from the Be Alarmed! Program were non-functional or were expired (5007 of 7,376) pre-existing smoke alarms).

“Ensuring your smoke alarms are properly working as well as less than 10-years old can help prevent a tragedy from occurring in the home. As a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting burn survivors, we’ve seen firsthand how devastating residential fires can be, too often when a smoke alarm wasn’t working or present. That simple check can save lives,” **said Philip Zaleski, Executive Director of Camp I Am Me by Illinois Fire Safety Alliance**.

Thanks to the “Be Alarmed!” program, in 2025, over 3200 Illinois homes and 7,800 residents are now protected by new smoke alarms and were educated about the importance of having a fire safety plan. Nearly 50,000 smoke alarms worth nearly \$1.5 million dollars of life saving fire safety devices have been distributed to Illinois fire departments since 2018 when the Be Alarmed! Smoke Alarm Installation Program began!

"Be Alarmed!" is a fire safety education and smoke alarm installation program administered cooperatively between Camp I Am Me and the Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal (OSFM). “The “Be Alarmed!” program is aimed at creating fire-safe communities.

For more information on the “Be Alarmed!” program visit: <https://www.ifs.org/prevention-resources/smoke-alarm/>