



Spring Safety



Spring Forward For Fire Safety:

Change Your Smoke Detector Batteries As You Change Your Clocks.

Daylight Saving Time means setting the clocks forward and it's chance to consider fire safety. It's important to have smoke detectors installed throughout your house but it's not enough to simply install and forget about them. Twice a year, it is critical that you test your smoke detectors and replace their batteries. An easy way to tackle this task is to change your smoke detector batteries as you go through your house to change your clocks. At the same time, it can be helpful to dust or vacuum the detectors to keep them free of debris that can interfere with their operation. Establishing this habit twice a year could save the lives of you and your loved ones.

More than half of home fire deaths result from fires in the homes with no smoke alarms. Eighty-six percent of all homes in the United States have at least one smoke detector but a third of them do not work. Most smoke detector failures are attributed to a lack of annual battery replacement. With Daylight Saving Time upon us, it is a good reminder to change those batteries. Should you neglect to change your smoke detector's batteries, the device may make a chirping sound to alert you that the battery is running low. One should not rely solely on that warning noise. It is always better to proactively change the battery every six months. Once your smoke detectors have been cleaned and their batteries replaced, ensure that everyone in your household is familiar with the sound the smoke alarm emits and knows how to react immediately.

In addition to replacing smoke detector batteries, spring is a good time to rid your home of fire hazards that exist in the form of grease, grime and dust that builds up on appliance chords and in hidden corners of the house. Below are some ways to consider fire safety while doing your spring cleaning this year.

Small Appliances

Appliances throughout your home should be cleared of dust and grime that has collected on both the units and their electrical cords. Grease should be removed from the outside of kitchen appliances with a slightly damp rag. The grease pan underneath the toaster oven should be cleaned.

Large Appliances

The area underneath and behind your washer and dryer units should be cleared of dust and stray materials and the dryer vent should also be cleaned. Refrigerators present the extra job of cleaning the condenser coils at the back. The coils collect dust and grime and need to be wiped clean or vacuumed to keep the condenser functioning. If you have a self-defrosting unit remember to empty and clean the tray at the bottom of the unit.

Electrical Cords

Check the cords of your washer and dryer units, television, stereo system, computer and small appliances such as the coffee pot, microwave and toaster oven. The cords should not be frayed, split or bare and should be unplugged and wiped clean with a dry cloth. Any frayed, split or bare electrical cords that you find while cleaning should be repaired or replaced to avoid the danger of electrical fires. Systems such as stereos, computers and televisions, which have multiple electrical cords, should be connected through a power strip with a circuit breaker protection to avoid overloading a single electric outlet. Make sure that cords are placed at least 2-3 inches away from the wall and are not run underneath rugs.

More:

Following these spring cleaning tips will help reduce fire hazards in your home by removing the dust and grime that can act as sources of ignition for a fire. By taking steps toward fire prevention, lives can be saved.

