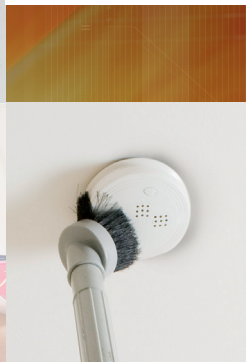




# ONLY WORKING SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES



## Smoke alarm facts



If you don't have a working smoke alarm installed in your home, and a fire occurs:

- *You are 57% more likely to suffer property loss and damage*
- *You are 26% more likely to suffer serious injuries*
- *You are four times more likely to die.*

All smoke alarms:

- *Contain a battery*
- *Need to be tested regularly*
- *Need to be replaced after 10 years.*

# Why should I have a smoke alarm?

When you're asleep you lose your sense of smell. A smoke alarm is your electronic nose. It will alert you if there is smoke from a fire.

A small fire can grow to involve an entire room in 2-3 minutes. A smoke alarm provides early warning and time to escape.

## ***Smoke alarms are compulsory in every home***

Since 1st August 1997, Victorian law states that smoke alarms (complying with Australian Standards AS 3786) must be installed in all homes, units, flats and townhouses.

It is the legal responsibility of all owners and landlords to install working smoke alarms.

Residential homes constructed before 1st August 1997 need only 9 volt battery powered smoke alarms installed.

Residential homes constructed after 1st August 1997 must have smoke alarms connected to 240 volt mains power. In addition a back up battery must be installed in the smoke alarm.

If you plan to renovate or extend your house, your building surveyor will determine if you need a smoke alarm connected to 240 volt mains power.

## There are two types of smoke alarms:

1. Photo-electric: detects visible smoke and slow smouldering fires
  - Suitable for most locations including near kitchens and in caravans
  - Less prone to false alarms from cooking.
2. Ionisation: detects particles of smoke from fast flaming fires

**All fire services in Australia recommend photo-electric smoke alarms when installing or replacing existing smoke alarms.**

**For additional protection consider installing interconnected smoke alarms connected to 240 volt mains power.**

## Smoke alarm models

- 9 volt battery powered
- 240 volt (mains power) with 9 volt replaceable backup battery
- 240 volt (mains power) with 10 year long life rechargeable, non replacement battery
- Specialised models for people who are deaf and hard of hearing (for more information contact VicDeaf Ph: 9473 1111; TTY 9473 1199; [www.vicdeaf.com.au](http://www.vicdeaf.com.au)).



## Extra features available with smoke alarms

- Interconnecting smoke alarm: When one smoke alarm operates, all connected smoke alarms will operate
- Smoke alarm with an emergency escape light
- Smoke alarm with a hush button
- Smoke alarm that can be connected to a security system
- Smoke alarm with vibrating pad alert and strobe light (for people who are deaf or hard of hearing)
- Smoke alarm with strobe light
- Smoke alarm that can be tested by a TV remote control
- Smoke alarm that can be tested by a torch.

## Where can I buy a smoke alarm?

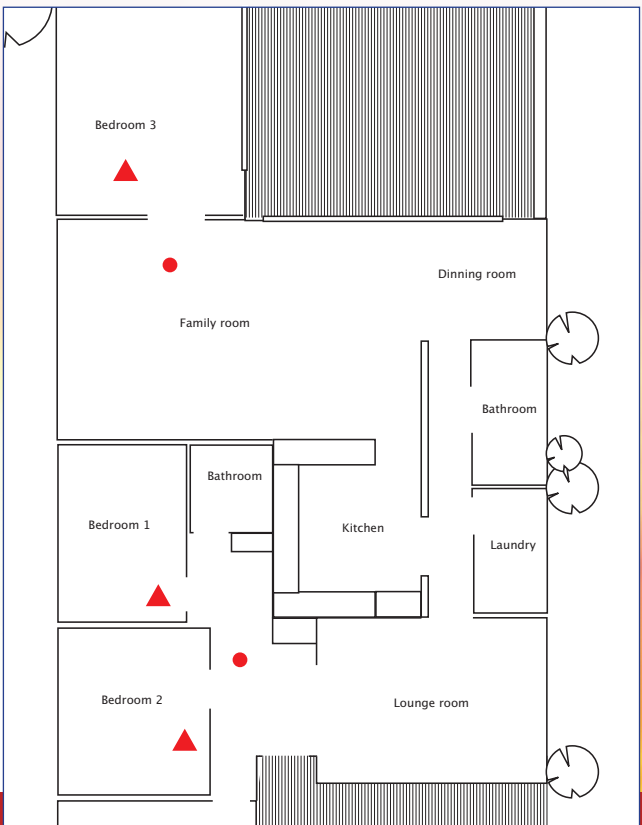
- Hardware stores, electrical retailers, department stores, fire protection companies.

## How do I install a smoke alarm?

- 9 volt powered smoke alarms can be installed by anyone following the instructions on the pack. Be careful when using a step ladder
- 240 volt (mains power) smoke alarms must be installed by a licensed electrician.

# Where do I put my smoke alarm?

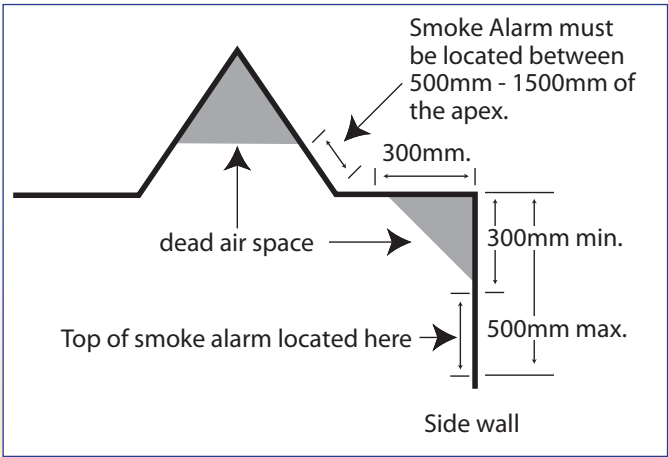
- Smoke alarms must be located between each bedroom area and the rest of the house
- ▲ In addition inside any bedroom where someone sleeps with the door shut
- In a two storey home a smoke alarm is required on every storey, located in the path that people will use to evacuate





# Mounting smoke alarms

Smoke alarms must be installed on or near the ceiling. Take care to avoid dead air spaces. Dead air spaces generally occur at the apex of cathedral ceilings and the corner junction of walls and ceilings.



Note: Cooking fires are common. High ceilings or the layout of your house may increase the time it takes for your smoke alarm to operate. Consider installing a photo-electric smoke alarm closer to the kitchen area.

# Frequently asked questions:

## *Why should I test my smoke alarm?*

- Your smoke alarm is only as good as its last test. Test to ensure the battery is not flat and that the alert sound Beep, Beep, Beep is heard.

## *Why does my smoke alarm beep once every 60 seconds or intermittently?*

- Because the 9 volt battery is going flat and needs replacing.

**Note:** Replace the smoke alarm if it still beeps after installing a new battery.

## *What can I do if my smoke alarm operates every time I make toast or have a shower?*

- Do not remove the battery
- Check the type of smoke alarm installed, if it is an ionisation type which has a radiation symbol, replace it with a photo-electric type smoke alarm
- If you have a photo-electric smoke alarm installed consider exhaust fans in the kitchen or bathroom
- Consider relocating the smoke alarm within placement requirements.



Radiation symbol on ionisation type smoke alarms



*Will I hear my smoke alarm if I am affected by alcohol, drugs or medication?*

- You may not hear the sound, therefore consider interconnecting your smoke alarms so other people in the house can wake you.

*How long does a smoke alarm last?*

- Smoke alarms have a 10 year life. The date of manufacture is indicated on the alarm. After this time they should be replaced. The Fire Services recommend photo-electric smoke alarms.

*What do I do with my old smoke alarm?*

You can dispose of it in household rubbish.

*What if I live in public housing?*

**Your smoke alarm is 240 volt (mains powered) with a non-replaceable long life re-chargeable battery.**

You cannot change the battery in your smoke alarm. If you have problems with your smoke alarm contact maintenance department on 13 11 72.

# Living with your smoke alarm

*How do I test and clean my smoke alarm?*



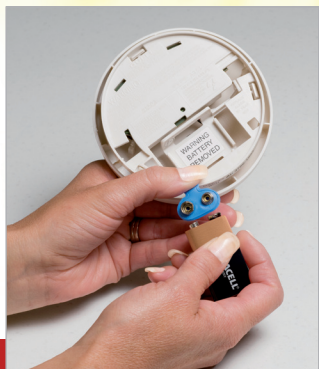
## **Monthly:**

**Test** by pressing the test button with a broom handle.



## **Yearly:**

Vacuum around your smoke alarm vents.



## **Yearly:**

Replace your 9 volt battery each year at the end of daylight saving. The Victorian Fire Services campaign each year at the end of daylight saving reminds people to **“Change your clock change your smoke alarm battery”**.

For further information contact:



Community Education Department - MFB

Tel: 9665 4464

Email: [commed@mfb.vic.gov.au](mailto:commed@mfb.vic.gov.au)

Web: [www.mfb.vic.gov.au](http://www.mfb.vic.gov.au)

If you need an interpreter contact:

Tel: 131 450 - Tell them your language and say you have a question for the MFB.



CFA Community Safety

Tel: 9262 8416

Email: [cfa-customer-support@cfa.vic.gov.au](mailto:cfa-customer-support@cfa.vic.gov.au)

Web: [www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au)

