

Sleep Easier With A Fire Detector

Each year more than 11,000 persons die in fires in the United States. More than half of the victims die where they live -- in their homes or apartments.

Most home fire deaths occur between midnight and 6 a.m. This is the time of greatest danger -- when people are asleep and unwarned. Because of this, a simple **fire warning system -- within the reach of all -- is probably the single most important lifesaving purchase an individual can make.**

In most cases, death is not the result of flames.

The primary killers are **smoke, poisonous gases or superheated air** which overcome victims as they sleep.

Fire and its deadly gases spread rapidly and sleeping persons do not awaken in time to escape.

Studies have show that from the time a fire breaks out a person has an average of **less than four minutes** to escape the overcoming affects of smoke, poisonous gases or superheated air.

Growing **awareness** of these dangers and the development of relatively inexpensive and reliable warning devices have led many homeowners and apartment dwellers to install **alarm systems** that will wake sleeping occupants.

Apartment tenants especially benefit from an early warning fire detector because of the usually limited exits from such dwellings in a fire emergency.

If you are considering a fire detection unit or system, you should **select carefully**. Some are not as effective as others in providing that crucial few moments of escape time.

Shapes To Live With:

There are several types of fire detectors on the market.

A suitable detector is the **combustion products detector**. It is designed to detect the invisible gases and microscopic airborne particles that are produced at the beginning of a fire.

The combustion products detector is small enough to be held in one hand and is easily installed. It uses either batteries or household electrical current. When this device detects combustion products, a loud horn sounds.

When batteries need to be replaced, a built in safety feature automatically sounds a warning -- different from the fire alarm signal.

Another commonly used home fire detector operates with a **heat sensor or thermostat** and sounds an alarm when a flaming fire creates enough heat -- usually 135 degrees.

A third type of alarm unit detects visible smoke. **Smoke detectors** sound an alarm when light passing a photocell is interrupted by a smoke buildup.

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Installed Where?:

Ideally, a home should have a combustion products or smoke detector near the bedrooms, and heat detectors in other areas, such as the kitchen or furnace room. Sufficient protection, however, can be achieved with a less expensive installation of a **combustion products detector at appropriate locations on the ceiling of each story or a single unit placed on a corridor ceiling leading to the bedrooms.** Correct placement of fire detectors in the home is vital. Manufacturer's guidelines should be followed closely.

How Much?:

The price of fire detection units and systems varies regionally. Individual products detectors cost \$50 and up. More elaborate installations, such as a single-station unit that can be wired to heat detectors in other areas of the home, costs about \$175. Wired systems or a system of unwired units, can cost anywhere from \$400 and up.

Labeled By Who?:

Whichever device you choose, be absolutely certain that it is **labeled** by a **nationally recognized fire testing laboratory**. The most prominent of these are Underwriters Laboratories (UL) and Factory Mutual (FM).

An Escape Plan:

Some Advice to **LIVE** by:

1. A home fire alarm system has one purpose only -- to warn of the presence of fire in the house.
2. If you are asleep, it will wake you. It can get you **UP**, but cannot get you **OUT** of the house. Getting **OUT** is your job, and you should plan for it in advance.
3. Part of your plan should be to meet at a specified location and count heads -- **THEN** notify the fire department.

NOTE: This leaflet can be read in 5 minutes. That's one minute more than you may have to escape a house on fire -- if you have been forewarned.

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