



# Smoke and CO Alarms for People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

**Working smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms save lives. People who are deaf or hard of hearing may not be able to depend on typical alarms to let them know there is danger.**

**There are special alarms and devices to ensure everyone can be alerted in case of fire or high CO levels.**

- ▶ When the smoke alarm sounds, strobe lights flash to alert people who are deaf or hard of hearing of a possible fire when they are awake.
- ▶ When they are asleep, a pillow or bed shaker should be used to wake and alert them to fire conditions so they can escape. This device is activated by the sound of a standard smoke alarm. People who are deaf may find that the shaker paired with a high-intensity strobe light is helpful to wake them.
- ▶ Smoke and CO alarms can be installed that use a low-frequency sound. These will work better to wake a sleeping person who has mild to severe hearing loss.
- ▶ These special devices and alarms can also signal when the battery is low.

Research the different products and select the ones that fit the needs of the people in your home. These can be easily installed without a professional. Products can be found in home improvement stores, online, and on manufacturer websites. Pick devices that are listed by a qualified testing laboratory, which is often disclosed on the product's packaging.

## **Did You Know?**

According to the National Institute of Health, one in eight people in the United States (13 percent, or 30 million) aged 12 years or older has hearing loss in both ears, based on standard hearing examinations.

## **Smoke Alarms**

- ▶ Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of the home, including the basement.
- ▶ For the best protection, choose interconnected smoke alarms. When one sounds, they all sound.
- ▶ Test alarms at least once a month using the test button.
- ▶ Replace smoke alarms if they are over 10 years old.

## **Carbon Monoxide (CO) Alarms**

- ▶ Install CO alarms outside each separate sleeping area and on every level of the home. This includes the basement and attic. Do not place alarms near fireplaces or fuel-burning appliances. Check to see what the law is in your community for placement.
- ▶ Replace CO alarms between 5-10 years or as stated in the manufacturer's instructions.

## **Reduce Your Risk!**

Installing both smoke alarms and fire sprinklers reduces the risk of death in a home fire by 82 percent, compared to having neither installed.

## **Make a Plan**

Everyone in the home should know the sounds and signals of the smoke and CO alarms. When the alarm sounds, get outside and stay outside. Have an outside meeting place to make sure that everyone gets out safely. Call 9-1-1 from outside your home from a mobile phone or a trusted neighbor's phone.



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