

FIRE STOPS WITH YOU



National statistics provided by the Federal Fire Administration indicate that **every two and a half hours someone is killed** in a home fire. Another **20,000** people are injured in home fires each year.

In Alabama, **half of all fire-related deaths** in the state occur in the Greater Birmingham area. In addition, **Alabama leads the Southeast** region in fire deaths.

Protecting your family from fire requires advance planning which includes the use of smoke detectors to provide early warning of fire.

The Birmingham Fire and Rescue Service Department is providing this brochure to ensure the safety of your family.

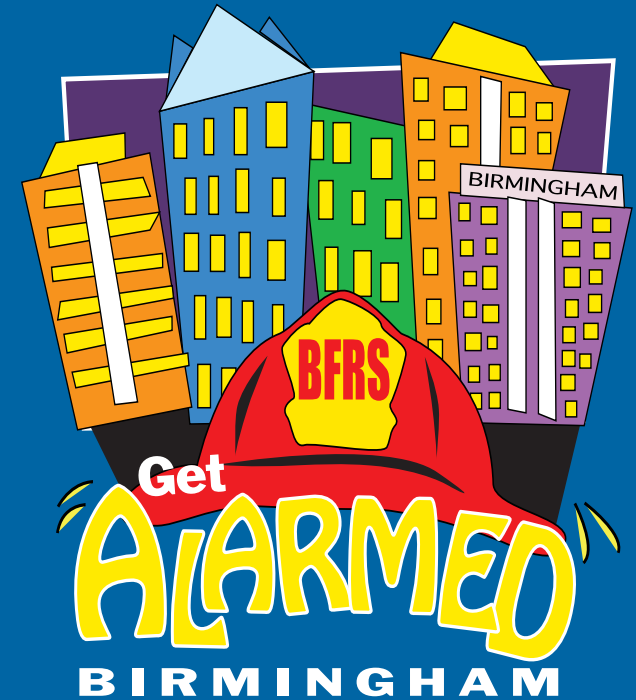


**BIRMINGHAM
FIRE AND RESCUE
SERVICE DEPARTMENT**

ORIGINAL FUNDING FOR THE 'GET ALARMED BIRMINGHAM' FIRE PREVENTION PROGRAM WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY A GRANT FROM THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY WITH MATCHING FUNDS FROM THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM AND THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF OUR LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY. PHASE III OF THIS PROGRAM IS MADE POSSIBLE BY THESE CORPORATE SPONSORS:



The material contained in this brochure is courtesy of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Fire Administration.



SMOKE ALARM SAFETY

A PUBLICATION FROM THE
**BIRMINGHAM FIRE AND
RESCUE SERVICE DEPARTMENT**

SMOKE ALARMS AND YOU

One of the most important fire-safety devices for the home is the self-contained smoke detector.

Several studies have concluded that smoke detectors cut in half a person's chance of dying in a fire.

HOW MANY DETECTORS DO I NEED IN MY HOME?

The primary job of your smoke detector is to alert your family of a fire, especially when they are fast asleep.

That's why at least one smoke alarm should be installed near bedrooms. Homes with an upstairs and downstairs need an alarm on each floor.

WHAT KIND OF SMOKE DETECTOR SHOULD I GET?

There are two types of home smoke detectors available: the ion type and the photoelectric type.

The ion type reacts faster to open flaming fires and is usually the less expensive option.

The photoelectric type reacts faster to smoldering fires and is less likely to react to cooking vapors.

Both types provide good protection and can be used without worry.

WHERE SHOULD IT BE INSTALLED?

Smoke detectors are normally installed on the ceiling or high on the wall, with the top of the detector not closer than 4 inches nor further than 12 inches from the ceiling.

Don't put your detector near heating and cooling vents (they might blow on the detector, preventing it from seeing smoke).

Also, avoid installing your smoke alarm near a kitchen or a bathroom (steam can set off the alarm when the door is opened).

TESTING AND MAINTENANCE

Smoke detectors should be tested at least once a month by pressing the test button, which comes standard on all smoke detectors.

Never use an open flame (like a lighter or burning paper) to test a detector.

Smoke detectors need no maintenance other than changing batteries annually, and an occasional vacuuming of dust or cobwebs.

WHAT IF MY ALARM "ACTS UP"?

Smoke detectors are highly reliable but can sometimes be fooled by cooking or steam.

If it sets off when there is no fire, it may need to be moved a few feet to a new position where it is not in the way of cooking vapors or steam.



HOW LONG WILL MY SMOKE ALARM LAST?

Smoke detectors have a useful life of about ten years. At that age they should be replaced, even if they seem to be in working order.