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# Keep 'Em Fresh… Change those Smoke Detector Batteries

As a convenient reminder, when we change our clocks, it's a good idea to replace those smoke detector batteries.

Homes built more recently have "wired" smoke detectors. Power is supplied to these devices by virtue of electrical connections to the home's power, but these devices also have back-up batteries in case of a power outage. Many of the wired varieties have 10-year batteries, but some don't. Those without 10-year back-up batteries need to have their batteries changed annually.

If you hear a chirping sound coming from your detector that is an indication that the battery is low and requires changing. The fall can be a better time to put in fresh batteries as weak or marginal batteries don't do well in cold weather. Replacing them in the fall when the clocks change is also a convenient reminder to do so. But it is strongly recommended to change them annually. So, if you changed them last spring, change them now.

For those who have "wired" smoke detectors, it is also imperative to know that those detectors DO NOT LAST FOREVER. Wired detectors have a 10-year operating life and should be replaced before the end of their operating life. Contact a local electrical contractor to replace these outdated units. You should never replace a "wired" detector with a battery operated one. Wired systems are designed to activate ALL THE DETECTORS if any one detector is activated. Replacing a wired detector with a battery operated one defeats this valuable safety feature.

For all smoke detectors, whether battery operated or wired, it is good practice to get in the habit of using a vacuum cleaner to clean them regularly. Newer detectors, in addition to smoke and heat, also detect particles in the air. As these dust particles accumulate, they can cause the detector to activate. Regular testing of the detector by pressing the "test" button is also recommended. You can use a broom handle or similar pole to activate this button, eliminating the need to climb a ladder.

Stay safe, practice regular detector maintenance.

If you have questions or need assistance regarding smoke detectors, or you need help changing batteries, we encourage you to call the Fairfield Glade Fire Department at 931-484-3801.