



**American  
Red Cross**

Heart of Tennessee Chapter

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*News Release*  
**NEWS RELEASE**

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## ***Red Cross Reminds Residents to Change Batteries In Smoke Detectors This Weekend***

**[MURFREESBORO], Tenn., November 3, 2010** – Since it comes later than usual this year, it's easy to forget we "fall back" and end Daylight Savings Time this coming weekend. The American Red Cross – Heart of Tennessee Chapter would like to remind everyone that turning back your clocks is also a great time to change the battery in your smoke detectors.

"We responded to 5 fires and helped 19 individuals with emergency food, clothing and shelter during October alone," said Heart of Tennessee Chapter CEO Greg King. "While great progress is being made in reducing the number of fire deaths in Middle Tennessee, we can't stress enough that having a working smoke alarm is the easiest and best thing you can do to protect you and your family from a fire," said King.

"We are bolstering our efforts to remind all Middle Tennesseans of the importance of proper installation of smoke alarms, practicing a home escape plan and the completion of the Home Fire Safety Check List," said Emergency Services Director, Brian Toll.

If you have a fire, smoke alarms can cut nearly in half your risk of dying in a fire. Smoke alarms sense abnormal amounts of smoke or invisible combustion gases in the air. They can detect both smoldering and flaming fires. The Red Cross reminds the public to become familiar with some basic smoke alarm safety precautions including:

- **If smoke alarms are not already in place, at a minimum install them on every level of the home and outside each sleeping area.** If a fire occurs inside a bedroom, dangerous gases can cause heavier sleep. For the best protection, install interconnected smoke alarms in each bedroom and throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.
- **To prevent nuisance alarms, vacuum cobwebs and dust from your smoke alarms monthly. Never** disable a smoke alarm, even if you experience nuisance alarms while cooking or showering. Clean the smoke alarm following the manufacturer's instructions and, if possible, relocate it away from the kitchen or bathroom. If nuisance alarms are a persistent problem, look for a different type of smoke alarm.
- **Use the test button to test your smoke alarms at least monthly.** The test feature tests all electronic functions and is safer than testing with a controlled fire (matches, lighters, cigarettes). If the smoke alarm manufacturer's instructions permit the use of an aerosol smoke product for testing the smoke alarm, and you prefer that method, choose one that has been listed (examined and tested to appropriate product safety standards) by a third-party product testing laboratory, and use it in accordance with the product instructions.
- **If you have battery-powered smoke alarms, replace the batteries at least once a year.** (Replace the batteries in your [carbon monoxide \(CO\) alarms](#) at the same time you replace your smoke alarm batteries.) Some agencies recommend that you replace batteries when the time changes from standard to daylight savings each spring and then back again in the fall. "Change your clock, change your batteries" Replacing batteries this often certainly will not hurt; however, data show that fresh batteries will last at least a year, so more frequent replacement is not necessary unless the smoke alarm begins to chirp.

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- **Replace your smoke alarms every 10 years.** This is the recommendation of the National Fire Protection Association and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Smoke alarms become less sensitive over time.
- **Be sure to install smoke alarms in areas where pets are and in other buildings that house animals where humans can hear them.**

*The Heart of Tennessee Chapter of the American Red Cross provides vital emergency assistance to help victims of local disasters in Rutherford, Bedford, Cannon, Franklin, Coffee & Moore counties. Over the past year the Chapter responded to 99 single family fires, trained nearly 11,625 people in CPR & First Aid, Babysitting and Aquatics training, and provided pre-deployment briefings and emergency communications for 284 families of active duty military personnel and their families. Over 13,177 pints of life-saving blood were collected from the community last year. All of these services are made possible by over 320 dedicated local Red Cross volunteers as well as through generous gifts from the local community. To get more information please call 615) 893-4272 or log on to [www.midtnredcross.org](http://www.midtnredcross.org).*

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