

Smoke Alarms

A smoke alarm is the most important safety feature of your home. Properly installed, working smoke alarms provide the early warning you need to safely escape from a fire.

Choosing an Alarm

- Be sure smoke alarms carry the label of an independent testing lab.
- Smoke alarms can run on batteries or on household currents.
- Smoke alarms have different sensor technologies:
 - *Ionization Smoke Alarms*: More effective against fast-flaming fires (fires that consume materials rapidly and spread quickly). Sources may be paper fires or kitchen fires.
 - *Photoelectric Smoke Alarms*: More effective against slow smoldering fires (fires that smolder for hours before bursting into flame.) Sources include cigarettes burning in couches or bedding.
 - *Combo Units*: Ionization/Photoelectric alarms are available and provide early warning of both types of fires.

Where to Install Smoke Alarms

- Install on every level of your home, including the basement and in every sleeping area. Ensure all family members can hear it.
- Mount alarms high on a wall or on top of the ceiling. Position wall-mounted alarms with the top of the alarm 4-12 inches (10-30 centimeters) from the ceiling.
- Position ceiling-mounted alarms at least 4 inches (10 centimeters) away from the nearest wall.
- Don't install smoke alarms near a window, door, or forced-air register where drafts could interfere with operation. The moving air can blow smoke away from the alarm's sensor.
- To avoid false alarms, keep smoke alarms at least 10 feet from stoves and steamy showers.

How to Install Smoke Alarms

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions on using a drill and screwdriver.
- Plug-in alarms must have restraining devices, so they cannot be unplugged by mistake.
- A qualified electrician must install hard-wired alarms.
- Never connect a smoke alarm to a circuit that can be turned off from a wall switch.

Maintenance Tips

- Test smoke alarms once a month by pushing the "test button."
- Install new batteries at least twice a year, when you change your clocks for daylight savings.
- Clean smoke alarms using a vacuum cleaner without removing the alarm's cover.
- Replace smoke alarms every 10 years.

Alarms for the Hearing Impaired

- These smoke alarms have a built-in strobe light.
- The alarm has both an audible and visible signal and can be mounted in ceilings and walls.

Renter/Owner Responsibilities

If you rent an apartment or house in Red Bank, the owner or management company is responsible for installing and repairing smoke alarms.

Tenants are responsible for maintaining and replacing batteries in their smoke alarms.