

# media release



## Change your clock! Change your smoke alarm battery!

Friday, 3 April 2009

When you turn your clocks back on Sunday, 5 April 2009, South Australia's fire services recommend that you change your smoke alarm batteries.

The Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) and Country Fire Service (CFS) also recommend that you **check the age** of your smoke alarms.

District Officer, Allan Foster of the MFS Community Safety Department says no matter what type of smoke alarms are installed or how they are powered (battery or 240 volt mains with back-up batteries), after 10 years they're too old to rely on.

"After 10 years the devices can take longer to respond to smoke, or might not even work at all. Don't take a chance.

"This year, instead of just replacing your smoke alarm batteries at the end of daylight saving, check the age of your smoke alarms **first** and replace the alarms if they are 10 years or older," Mr Foster says.

The fire services also recommend that when you replace old smoke alarms you upgrade from the basic minimum required by law.

Contact your electrician to upgrade your smoke alarms with:

- smoke alarms that comply with Australian Standard 3786
- photo-electric smoke alarms that are connected to the mains power supply (i.e. hard wired)
- smoke alarms in all sleeping areas, in passageways leading to bedrooms and in living areas; and
- smoke alarms that are all interconnected with one another.

The Manager of CFS Community Education, Fiona Dunstan says the importance of smoke alarms was highlighted by startling figures just released in the Duracell National Fire Safety Report.

The report found that one in five people take down their smoke alarm or remove a battery when it is set off by cooking. In almost a third of those cases, the smoke alarm or battery wasn't replaced straight away and in seven per cent of cases, not replaced at all.

"Without operating smoke alarms, a house fire is significantly more likely to result in an injury or fatality. Only **working** smoke alarms save lives," Ms Dunstan says.

For more information about smoke alarms and retiring them after 10 years, visit:

[http://www.mfs.sa.gov.au/site/community\\_safety/smoke\\_alarm\\_retirement\\_campaign.jsp](http://www.mfs.sa.gov.au/site/community_safety/smoke_alarm_retirement_campaign.jsp)