

Change your clock; check your smoke alarm

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Nationally, residents are being told to 'change your clock, change your battery' but that may not be true for most Oregon residents.

Since 1999, Oregon Revised Statute 479.297 requires solely battery operated ionization-only alarms, sold in Oregon, to have a hush feature and a ten-year battery. "Many homes in Oregon now have these alarms," states Oregon State Fire Marshal Nancy Orr. "Residents should check their smoke alarms to make sure they are working, then determine if they have a solely battery operated ionization-only alarm with a ten-year battery before replacing the battery. Smoke alarms deteriorate over time and any alarm ten-years old or older should be replaced entirely." Exempt from Oregon's unique law are photoelectric-only alarms and combination photoelectric-ionization alarms. These alarms do not require a hush feature and may be powered with a standard 9-volt battery. Some styles of wireless and interconnected alarms are also exempt. "In 2005, 64 percent of residential fire fatalities occurred in residences without an alarm or where the alarm was present but not working," explains Orr. "Having working smoke alarms throughout your home doubles your chance of surviving fire." Orr recommends residents follow these smoke alarm tips:

- Test and clean smoke alarms monthly.
- Replace smoke alarms 10 years old or older with new alarms.
- Install alarms on every level of your home, outside each sleeping area and in every bedroom.
- Have a home escape plan and practice it regularly with the entire family.
- Alarms should never be disconnected or batteries removed for other uses.

For more information: http://www.oregon.gov/OSP/SFM/Smoke_Alarms_Home.shtml.

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