

Home Smoke Detectors **Prevention Through Detection**

The majority of fatalities that occur in home fires happen at night when people are asleep. Contrary to popular belief, the smell of smoke may not wake a sleeping person. Poisonous gases and smoke produced by a fire can numb the senses and quickly put you into a deeper sleep.

By sounding an alarm and alerting you and your family to a fire in time to escape, household smoke detectors can cut your chances of dying in a home fire by approximately 40 percent.

Selecting a Detector: Smoke detectors are available in a variety of brands and can be purchased in hardware, department and discount stores. Make sure the detector you buy has been approved by the California Fire Marshal and has been tested by the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL). Battery-operated units are preferable to those that run on electric current. Make sure you have a battery back-up if you do purchase a detector which runs by electricity.

Installation: Smoke detectors should be installed in hallways just outside where the bedrooms are located in single-story homes. A minimum of two detectors are recommended for two-story homes. On the bottom floor, place it near the bedrooms. If there are no bedrooms downstairs, detectors should be installed in or near living areas, dens or family rooms. On the second floor, detectors should be placed just outside the bedrooms. Detectors should NOT be installed near kitchens or heat ducts where fumes could set off false alarms.