

media release



Only working smoke alarms save lives

Wednesday, 03 April 2019

As the end of daylight saving approaches, South Australians are reminded to change their smoke alarm batteries as they wind back their clocks this weekend.

Only working smoke alarms save lives and the Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) and Country Fire Service (CFS) are urging the community to ensure their smoke alarms are reliable.

“While you’re changing the batteries in your smoke alarms, it’s important to check the age of your smoke alarms too. The smoke alarm age can be checked by looking on, or inside, the smoke alarm as the Australian Standard (AS3786) requires that there is a date stamp printed on them. If you discover that your smoke alarms are more than 10 years old, it’s time to replace them, as they become less reliable with age,” MFS Commander of Community Safety and Resilience Phil Crossley said.

From 01 July 2018 to 31 March 2019, almost half of serious residential fires, where damage exceeded \$40,000, may have been avoided if working smoke alarms were present*.

**Figures cover MFS and CFS residential fires.*

South Australia’s Fire Services agree this figure sends a strong message to all households of the importance of replacing smoke alarm batteries annually and ensuring you have working smoke alarms.

“What some people don’t realise is that when you’re asleep, your sense of smell is reduced. In the event of a fire, smoke alarms give people early warning, providing vital minutes to escape and call ‘000’” MFS Commander Phil Crossley said.

CFS Director for Preparedness, Commander Brett Loughlin said having working smoke alarms in your home is one of the most important things you can do for your safety and the safety of your family.

“Daylight Saving is a great reminder to change your smoke alarm batteries when you change your clocks – that way working smoke alarms can help to keep your family safe all-year-round.

“A working smoke alarm is only one part of surviving a home fire. Just like your Bushfire Survival Plan, everyone in your family needs to know what they need to do to stay safe and you need to practice your plan regularly.” CFS Director for Preparedness, Commander Brett Loughlin said.

Each year at the end of daylight saving all smoke alarms require the following actions:

- Replaceable smoke alarm batteries should be changed every year at the end of daylight saving, and whenever a ‘battery-low’ warning ‘beep’ is heard. Hard-wired smoke alarms may also have replaceable backup batteries.
- Check the age of your smoke alarm. Smoke alarms should be replaced every ten years as they become less reliable beyond this age. The date is printed on, or inside the smoke alarm.

For more information about smoke alarms visit www.mfs.sa.gov.au.

**For media enquiries telephone the
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Further information:

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Or visit www.cfs.sa.gov.au and www.mfs.sa.gov.au