



# DRUMHELLER

## PROTECTIVE SERVICES



Information obtained from the Province of Alberta, Fire Commissioner's Office

[http://www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/fco\\_index.htm](http://www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/fco_index.htm)

## Don't Neglect Your Smoke Alarms

Smoke alarms save lives by sounding an early warning when smoke is present. Since most fatal home fires occur at night, when people are asleep, the early warning of a smoke alarm can wake people in time for them to escape. However, most homeowners seem to forget the alarms exist once they are installed. Often homeowners neglect the need for periodic testing and cleaning of smoke alarms. Over time, dust and cobwebs can clog the openings of the sensory device and with age, electronic components may fail or wear out. In battery-operated smoke alarms, batteries run down or may have been removed for other uses. If not regularly tested and cleaned, in a real fire emergency, poorly maintained smoke alarms may not work as expected, endangering lives.

### Three things are important when it comes to smoke alarms:

- Install them in your home. Smoke alarms are cheap, yet effective life saving devices. Follow manufactures recommendations when installing them.
- Test them at least monthly, to make sure they are still working. Drift smoke from a just extinguished candle or from an incense stick. Alarm should sound within 20 seconds. Fan smoke away to silence the alarm.

### If the alarm does not sound:

#### Possible Cause Action

Battery dead Replace immediately  
No electricity Check fuse box/breaker panel or refer to electrician  
Smoke alarm dead Replace immediately. Life span of a smoke alarm is about 10 years.

- Maintain them. Clean and gently vacuum twice a year to remove dust and cobwebs. Replace batteries once a year or as needed. Never remove batteries for other uses. You will be defeating a life-saving device for something far less important.