

Smoke alarms

Smoke alarms are now compulsory in all homes.

Smoke alarms are readily available in most hardware stores. It is important that they are fitted correctly and the correct number is installed in each home. The number needed will depend on the size of the home and the number of rooms.

There are two main types of alarms:

1. Alarms powered by a ten-year, long-life battery. These must be replaced every ten years by a qualified electrician.
2. Alarms with short-life, 9-volt batteries. The batteries in these should last a year. However, for greater safety change them twice a year on the days when there is a change to and from daylight saving. You won't forget!

Any alarm directly connected to the power supply (hard-wired) requires back-up batteries in case of power failures.

Looking after a smoke alarm

Step 1

Every month press the central button with a broom handle. The alarm should give off a loud piercing sound.

Step 2

Every six months clean the alarm with a vacuum cleaner. This removes dust particles that interfere with the alarm's efficiency.

Step 3

Change the batteries as suggested.

For more information about the types of smoke alarms contact your local fire brigade.

