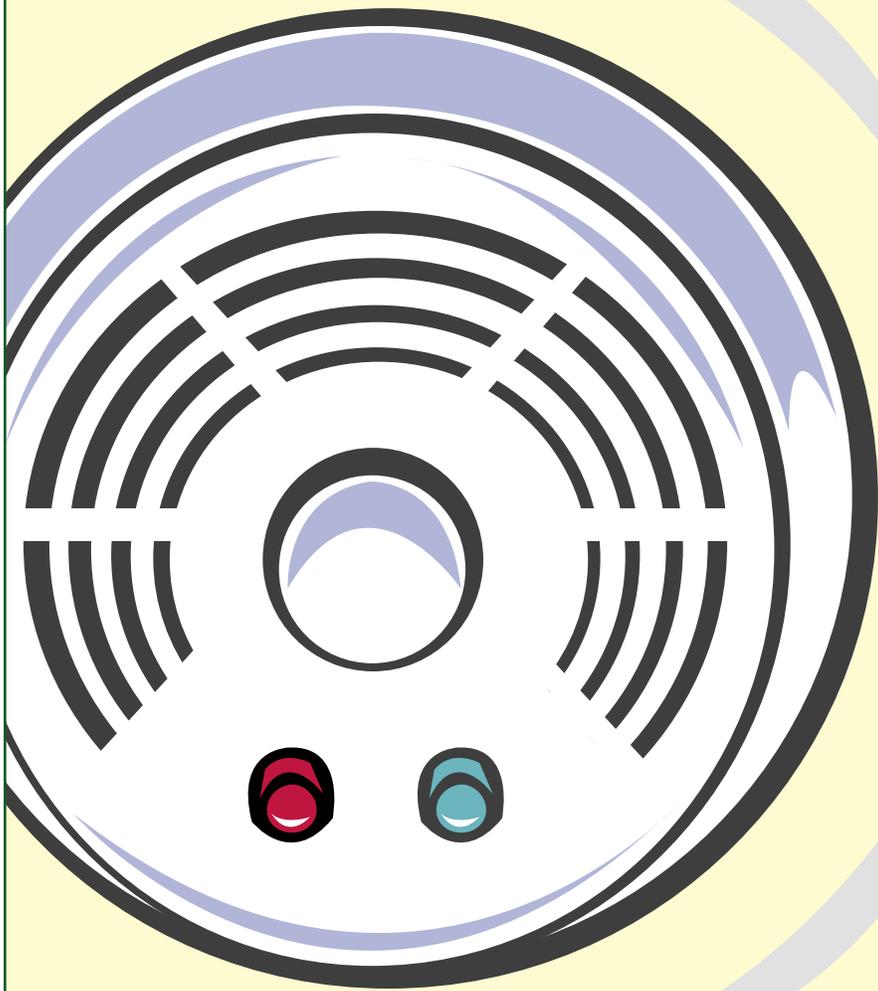


**Planning & Implementing a Successful
Smoke Alarm Installation Program**



Smoke Alarm Statistics

- **Smoke alarms are the residential fire safety success story of the past quarter century.**
- **Each year, roughly 70 percent of home fire deaths result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.**
- **Homes with smoke alarms (whether or not they are operational) typically have a death rate that is 40 to 50 percent less than the rate for homes without alarms.**
- **If every home had working smoke alarms, U.S. home fire deaths would decrease by an estimated 36 percent, resulting in an estimated 1,120 lives saved per year.**
- **Smoke alarms fail most of the time because of missing, disconnected or dead batteries.**

A Safer Community—For Everyone

After a tragic fire, communities often come together to address fire safety. But what if there was a way for communities to work together before a fire broke out, to help save property and lives before they were lost?

A smoke alarm installation program in your community can make a measurable difference in reducing deaths and injuries in a fire. Smoke alarms are the life-saving success story of the past 30 years. Roughly 70 percent of home fire deaths in the United States result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.

Installing Safety

The approach to an installation program is simple: fire safety advocates in your community—from firefighters and safety educators to business leaders and representatives of older adult or health groups—team up to install smoke alarms. Your installation program can be broad, targeting an entire community, or very focused, reaching out to a core group of vulnerable citizens.

However you choose to go about it, by installing smoke alarms in homes, you'll be doing your part to make residents and your entire community much safer.



From Start to Finish

To help you plan and implement your own smoke alarm installation program, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has developed this comprehensive guide. In it, you'll find everything you need to get started, from tips on how to select and train volunteers, to pointers on soliciting donations and publicizing your program.

In putting together this guide, we've relied on the experts: safety advocates from across the country who've conducted their own successful smoke alarm installation programs. From urban areas, to sprawling suburbs, to rural hamlets, our experts have helped to get

smoke alarms installed just about everywhere. Chances are, there is a community mentioned in these pages that isn't that different from your own.

So what are you waiting for? Let's get started!

Note: Smoke alarm installation programs, in which firefighters and trained volunteers install smoke alarms and batteries, are not the same as smoke alarm giveaway projects. Experts warn that simply giving residents alarms does not ensure that they will be installed correctly, if at all.

The Mississippi Project

In 2002, a home fire in Tchula, MS, claimed the lives of six children. Since then, local leaders and the Mississippi High-Risk Fire Safety Task Force have been working with national safety organizations, including NFPA and the U.S. Fire Administration, to keep such a tragedy from happening again.

Their goal: to get working smoke alarms installed in every home in Holmes County—where Tchula is located—one of the most impoverished counties in the nation. It was a monumental task. Firefighters and volunteers have installed 8,700 smoke alarms, with 10-year lithium batteries, in homes throughout the county.

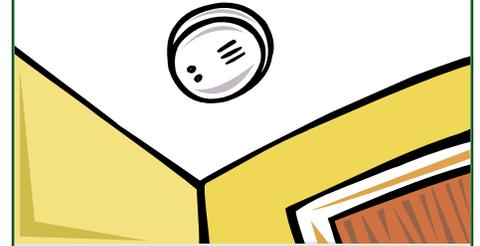
For coordinator Margaret Wilson and her team of volunteers from the community and the Holmes County fire departments, making sure that local residents get the message has required phone calls, home visits, community meetings and a whole lot of shoe leather. They have also publicized the installation project in local newspapers and television stations and by distributing brochures through area churches.

“We’re doing it street by street, going house to house,” says Wilson. “For people who aren’t home, we leave a flier telling them to call us if they need an alarm or if they need the batteries changed. A lot of people think that it’s enough to have the smoke alarms in their home, but they need to check to make sure that they work.”

While installing 8,700 alarms may seem like a tall task, Wilson insists that the key to an efficient and effective installation program is good, reliable volunteers, no matter how many alarms you are seeking to install. “Make sure you have some good volunteers who are dedicated and get the job done,” she says.



Yazoo City



On October 21, 2004, three adults and three children, ages 9 to 15, safely escaped a fire in their home in Yazoo City, MS. Firefighters say that a smoke alarm installation project, spearheaded by NFPA, was responsible for the successful escape.

In 2003, after five children died in a home fire in Yazoo City, the NFPA Center for High-Risk Outreach donated 3,000, 10-year battery smoke alarms to the city, as well as drills, ladders, and educational materials. Also, First Alert home safety products company donated 250 alarms and the Mississippi Department of Health donated 300.

Fire Marshal James Jackson says that by the time he and his volunteers are done, they will have installed 3,550 alarms. Every home in Yazoo City will have smoke alarm coverage. To get the word out about the program, the fire department has run announcements on local radio stations and in the newspaper. One key to the program’s success: a visible presence by the fire department. “When we go out, we take a fire truck. If folks see a fire truck, they’ll let you in,” says Jackson.

Keys to Success



Spotlight: Fire Department Participation

From big cities to small towns, organizers of successful smoke alarm installation projects can agree on one thing: fire department participation is key to an effective campaign. “People associate smoke alarms with fire departments,” says Mark Jackson, a public health advisor for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, GA, who administers a program that has funded 16 states to do smoke alarm installation and education. “Partnering with the fire department gives credibility to an installation program and that uniform is often what gets people into the homes,” says Jackson.

Step One: Organize a Planning Committee

A successful smoke alarm installation requires more than just installing smoke alarms. The key to a well-run program is advanced planning and a steering committee that has leaders from throughout the community.

Start by identifying organizations that should be part of your planning team. You’ll probably want to start with representatives of the local fire department, including the local fire chief, head of the firefighters union, or the leader of the volunteer firefighter association. You’ll also want to involve local safety advocates, community organizations and businesses. Remember, the more diverse the group of institutions you include in the planning process, the better chance you’ll have of reaching local residents and conducting a successful installation project.



Here’s who you should think about involving—and how they can make your program a success:

Local fire department or firefighters union

They are the first link to fire safety in the community.

Businesses, including retail outlets

From big home improvement stores to small local outfits, businesses are often willing to donate supplies, including smoke alarms, batteries, ladders and drills.

Local chapters of service clubs

Service clubs such as Rotary International, The Lions Clubs International, 100 Black Men of America, The National Coalition of 100 Black Women, The Elks Club and Kiwanis International, can be a key source of volunteers and often have connections with local businesses.

Older adult organizations

Older residents are among the most vulnerable to fire death. Organizations that service this population can help you reach them.

Health and safety agencies and organizations

Fire prevention is a key issue for organizations and agencies that work on health and safety issues.

Faith-based institutions

Local houses of worship can help you get the word out about your smoke alarm installation project.

Electricians or members of an electricians’ union

Their labor can be key (and they may be willing to donate it), especially if you are installing alarms that must be hardwired.

Step TWO: Identify Your Target Population

You've decided that you want to conduct a smoke alarm installation program. You've even begun to assemble your planning committee. But what kinds of residents are you going to target?

While organizers of smoke alarm programs, like the one in Holmes County, MS, set an ambitious goal of installing alarms in every home, many other communities have successfully conducted installation campaigns that take a far more limited approach. Some choose homes within a single census tract, while others identify a particularly vulnerable population, then try to reach them block by block.

The scope of your installation program will be determined by the resources available to you and the nature of the community in which you live. Answering the following questions will help you to take the next steps toward planning and implementing a successful campaign.

- How would you characterize the size and population demographics of your community?
- Are there neighborhoods in your area that have experienced many fire deaths or have the most fire runs? (Note: the local fire department will know the answer to this question.)
- What are the high-risk populations in your area?
- What kinds of resources are available to you to conduct an installation campaign?

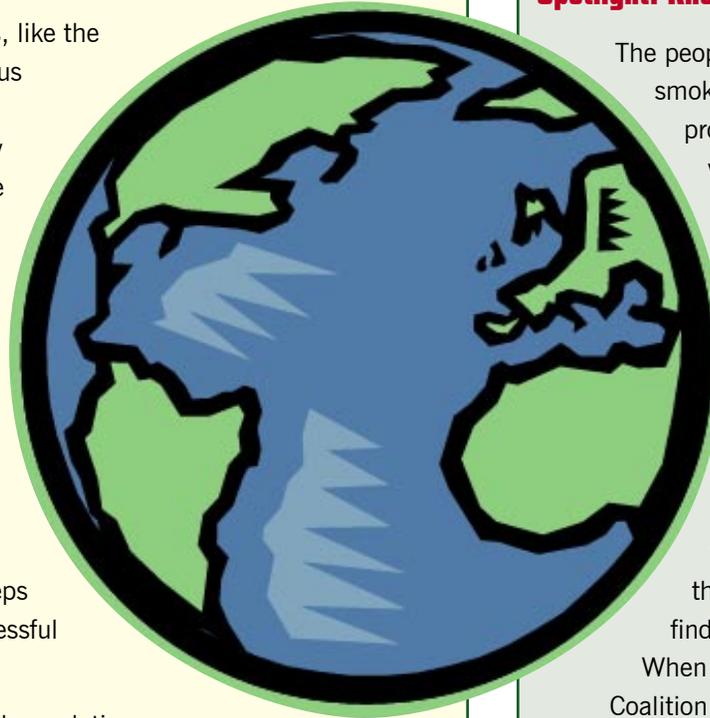
Keys to Success



Spotlight: Know Your Community

The people behind successful smoke alarm installation programs share one very important trait: No matter where they live, they are extremely knowledgeable about the communities in which they reside and work. And if there is something they don't know, they know how to find the information.

When the SAFE KIDS Coalition of Southeastern Pennsylvania was preparing to launch an ambitious installation and education program in an impoverished Philadelphia neighborhood, they knew that they couldn't move forward without answering a basic question: Did residents of the neighborhood trust the fire department? To answer that question, SAFE KIDS, which spearheaded the program along with the Philadelphia Children's Hospital, held two sets of focus groups in the neighborhood. "We needed to know what the best vehicle was for getting into these homes," says Gina Duchossois, chair of the coalition. "This was going to be a two-year project for us and we wanted to make sure that we had the right information."



Keys to Success



Spotlight: Answering a Wake-Up Call

Fire safety advocates in Plano, TX, didn't need to do research to determine which of their town's residents were vulnerable to fire death. In 2003, after 22 years without a fire death, this town of 240,000 lost two elderly people in home fires. While the fire department had been conducting smoke alarm installations since 1996, the tragic deaths spurred a new effort to reach out to older adults, particularly those living alone.

In the past, notes fire safety education coordinator Peggy Harrell, fire department representatives and volunteers have targeted single family residences. "But both of our fire deaths were in apartments, so we're really focusing on how we can reach out to apartment dwellers." Now, in addition to installing smoke alarms in targeted neighborhoods three times a year, volunteers are also visiting apartment complexes, leaving behind door hangers and newsletters emblazoned with a simple message: Make sure that your apartment has a working smoke alarm. "I leave my phone number behind too," says Harrell. "That way, they can call me with any questions."

Step Three: Identify High-Risk Residents in Your Community

NFPA research consistently shows that certain populations are particularly vulnerable to fire-related deaths and injuries. By targeting these populations in your smoke alarm installation efforts, you'll be striking a significant blow against the risk of death and harm from fire. These at-risk groups include:

- **Young children**
- **Older adults**
- **People with disabilities**
- **Low-income communities, communities with many recent immigrants from non-English speaking countries**
- **Residents of homes with security bars**

But the home of a vulnerable individual, or even an entire at-risk neighborhood, never exists in isolation, notes safety advocate Sharron Beals, the executive director of Beechwood on the Bay, a nonprofit agency in Quincy, MA, that serves young children and older adults. "A community is at risk if it has vulnerable homes and those tend to be the homes of seniors," says Beals, who helps coordinate a smoke alarm installation program for adults 75 and older. "If your

neighbor is elderly and can't get up on a ladder to check the battery in his alarm, then you're at risk too. When you have vulnerable residents, you have a vulnerable community."



Step Four: Solicit Financial Support and Donations

You've got your plan, and you've assembled a group of experts to help you implement it. But you're still missing an essential component: supplies, including smoke alarms, batteries, ladders, drills and other equipment.

While some fire departments and safety organizations rely on grants from national organizations including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and NFPA to fund their smoke alarm installation programs, many communities conduct their campaigns using equipment and labor that's donated locally. Donations solicited from area businesses can significantly defray the cost of your installation program.

But how to begin? You should start by identifying businesses—either national corporations with an outlet in your area, or home-grown companies— or institutions that might have an interest in fire prevention. Even businesses that would seem to have little to do with safety often share an interest in supporting initiatives that work to make their community safer. These could include:

- **Stores that sell smoke alarms or batteries**

Including Wal-Mart, Lowe's, The Home Depot, True Value and other hardware, home improvement and retail outlets.

- **Insurance companies with offices in your area**

Ask them to consider making a donation to support the program.

- **Hospitals or other healthcare organizations**

Supporting a smoke alarm installation program complements their community health mission.

- **Printing presses or copy shops**

Approach them about donating the printing of promotional materials.

- **Restaurants or grocery stores**

They may be interested in donating food to feed hungry volunteers.

Keys to Success



Spotlight: Business to the Rescue

When fire inspector Cindy Kettering of the Bend, OR, fire department got a call from a local resident in need of a special smoke alarm for the hearing impaired, she knew just what to do: She contacted Gentex, Inc., a manufacturer of fire protection equipment, including smoke alarms that utilize visual signals. "They donated \$5,000 worth of alarms, enabling us to expand our smoke alarm program to include services to Bend's hearing impaired residents," says Kettering. It's far from the first time that she has approached businesses—both local and national—about supporting Bend's smoke alarm installation program. In recent years, she has secured donations from companies including Lowe's, The Home Depot, Wal-Mart, Fred Meyer and Costco. What's the trick to a successful solicitation? "Try to get a face-to-face meeting with store management as a way to introduce yourself. Just say 'Hey, I'm in the community.' That's how you begin to cultivate that good relationship," says Kettering. "And don't forget to send a thank you letter."

Keys to Success



Spotlight: Rural Installation Programs

Conducting a smoke alarm installation program in a rural area presents a unique set of challenges. Paying repeat visits to residents who live in isolated areas, for example, is much more time consuming than returning to a densely populated urban neighborhood. "Once you get outside of the city limits, it's just not realistic," says Steve Davidson, program administrator for the Office of Injury Prevention in the Georgia Division of Public Health. Instead, firefighters and fire safety advocates in Davidson's neck of the woods leave door hangers at houses where no one is home, and rely on a tight network of neighbors and friends to spread the word about the installation effort. "The good part about living in a rural area is that people tend to know each other and you get very few refusals," says Davidson.

He notes that rural Georgia is often referred to as the "Burn Belt" due to its high percentage of old and highly combustible dwellings. Thanks to the efforts of Davidson and other safety advocates, however, rural Georgians are increasingly likely to escape from home fires safely. Davidson's office currently oversees 25 smoke alarm installation programs across the state. "In the past three years, we've had 70 saves."

Sample Letter to Area Businesses

Send this letter to area businesses months before you plan to conduct your smoke alarm installation.

Dear (Name of Store Manager):

The commitment of (NAME OF STORE) to public safety is well known. Because of this, the (Town/City) Fire Department and (NAME OF ORGANIZATION) would like to invite you to support our smoke alarm installation project. Smoke alarms are the most effective tool we have to prevent deaths from fire, but many (Town/City) residents don't have working alarms in their homes. With the support of (NAME OF STORE), we'll be able to reach more local residents than ever.

There are many ways that your (NAME) store can support this life-saving program, including donating smoke alarms and batteries, making a financial contribution, or by letting your customers know about the installation campaign. I hope that you'll consider partnering with us to make this essential safety program a success.

In return, we will recognize the support of (STORE NAME) by (Clearly explain how you plan to promote the business's involvement in your campaign.)

I will follow up with you next week, and look forward to speaking with you about ways that we can work together to increase fire safety in (Town/City). I can be reached at (phone number) if you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)

(Title)

(Town/City) Fire Department Or Organization

Step Five: Get the Word Out About Your Program

You know the story about the tree that fell in the forest, but there being no one there to hear it? The same rule applies to public safety initiatives. An effective smoke alarm installation program depends on a successful publicity strategy. Getting the word out about your campaign will inform local residents that you're going to be in their neighborhood, and get people talking about smoke alarms and fire safety.

Contacting the local media is one way to generate publicity for your installation program (We've included a sample press release that you can customize and send out to newspapers, television and radio stations in your area).

But there are other ways to spread the word as well. Here's a look:

Let them know you're coming

If you plan to be in a particular neighborhood on a scheduled day, let residents know in advance. Leave door hangers or post handbills on telephone poles in the targeted area.

Work through the schools

One way to contact parents in a targeted area is to get materials into the hands of their children through teachers who are fire safety advocates. Look for teachers who are part of NFPA's *Risk Watch*® and the *Learn Not to Burn*® programs, or who regularly participate in Fire Prevention Week activities.

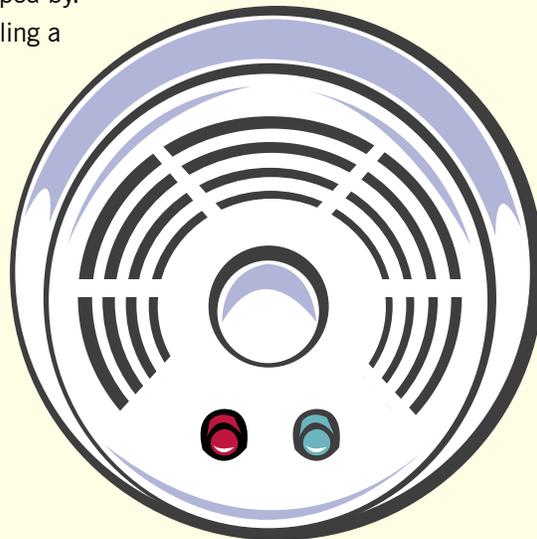
Reach people where they are

If you plan to target a particular population—say, older adults—identify places that cater to them and ask about handing out your materials there. NFPA's *Remembering When: A Fire and Fall Prevention Program for Older Adults*™ includes a smoke alarm installation component.

Leave a calling card

If you miss residents in a targeted area, don't give up. Leave a door hanger to let them know that you've stopped by.

Give residents the option of calling a contact in the fire department to have an alarm installed at a later date.



Keys to Success



Spotlight: Life-Saving Publicity

When Battalion Chief John Flahie of the Moab Valley Fire Protection District in Moab, UT, wanted to get fliers about a smoke alarm installation program into the hands of residents, he started with local social service agencies. "They were best able to identify their clients," says Flahie. "I supplied the fliers and they handed them out. Then it was up to the client to contact us." The result: The Moab Fire Department had more requests than alarms. Flahie also runs ads on the radio and television and in print about his smoke alarm installation program, but has found that working with aid agencies has been key in reaching Moab's large population of seasonal workers. "This is a boom and bust economy. We have a lot of people who are just scraping by and if we can let them know that we're offering free smoke alarms, they're going to take advantage of it."



Training Tips

Know where to install smoke alarms

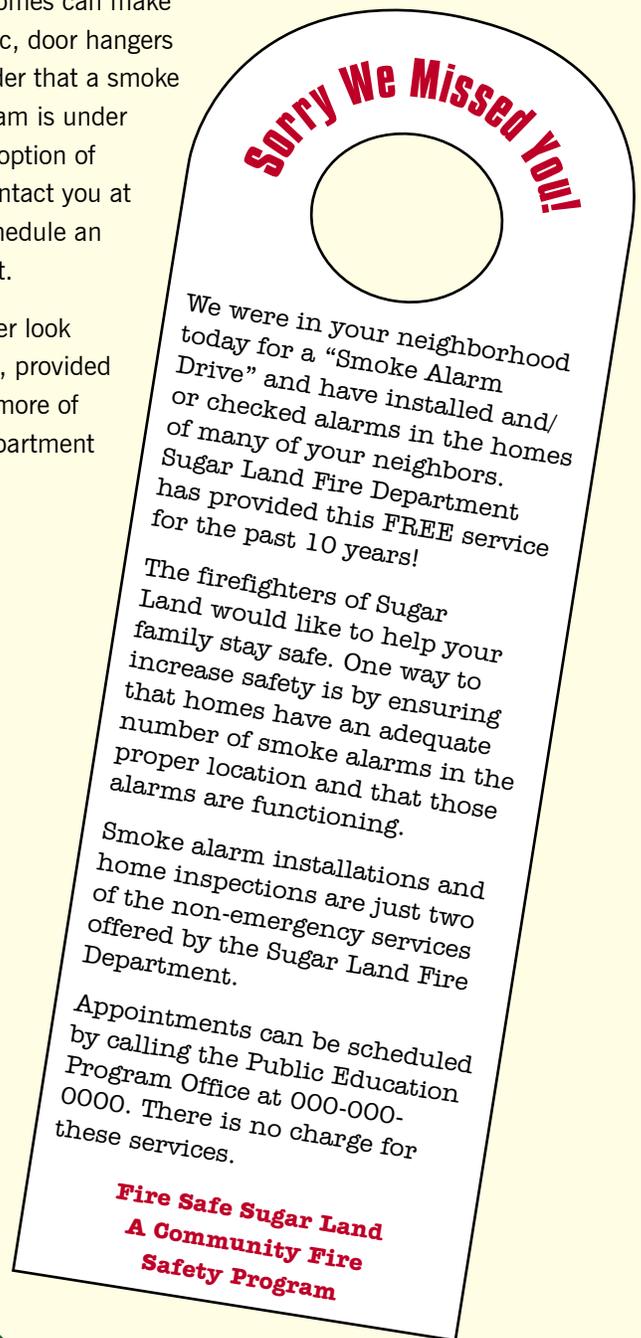
A successful installation program involves making sure that alarms are installed correctly—and in the right locations.

- Install smoke alarms on every level of the home, including the basement, making sure that there is an alarm outside every separate sleeping area.
- In addition to installing alarms on every level and outside the sleeping areas, it's a good idea to install smoke alarms in all bedrooms.
- For manufactured (mobile) homes, install a smoke alarm outside of each sleeping area and inside of each bedroom.
- If someone in the home is deaf or hard of hearing, consider installing an alarm that combines flashing lights, vibration and/or sound.
- Mount smoke alarms high on walls or ceilings (remember, smoke rises). Ceiling mounted alarms should be installed at least four inches away from the nearest wall; wall-mounted alarms should be installed four to 12 inches away from the ceiling.
- If you have ceilings that are pitched, install the alarm near the ceiling's highest point.
- Don't install smoke alarms near windows, doors, or ducts where drafts might interfere with their operation.
- Smoke alarms should not be installed in kitchens, bathrooms or garages.

Sample Door Hanger

Door hangers are a great way to let residents know that you're planning to be in the area to install smoke alarms. And if you miss a resident, especially in rural areas where the distance between homes can make multiple visits unrealistic, door hangers are a convenient reminder that a smoke alarm installation program is under way. You also have the option of allowing residents to contact you at their convenience to schedule an installation appointment.

What does a door hanger look like? Here's an example, provided by Capt. Michael McLemore of the Sugar Land Fire Department in Sugar Land, TX.



Sample Press Release

Send this release out at least two weeks before you plan to conduct your smoke alarm installation.

Keys to Success



Spotlight: Choose Volunteers Carefully

Fire safety advocate Sharron Beals hopes that however you recruit your volunteers, you'll do so with an eye toward the safety of the people you're ultimately serving. "We're trying to ensure senior safety," says Beals, executive director of Beechwood on the Bay in Quincy, MA. "You don't want to end up making their vulnerability aware to the wrong people." She urges planning committee members to know who their volunteers are and to make sure that they're adequately supervised during the installation portion of the project. Beals's group uses off-duty firefighters and the local Rotary

group as its resource (Beals is a member). "It could be another group, but the key is that you have a group with knowledge of the members it's supplying and a level of accountability."

For release on: (Month/Date/Year)
For more information, contact: (Your Name)
(Your telephone number)
(Your Town/City)

(Your Town/City/) and Community Organizations to Install Smoke Alarms

(Your Town/City)– As part of a community-wide fire prevention effort, firefighters from (Your Fire Department) and members of (Participating Organizations) will visit local residents on (Month, Date) to perform free smoke alarm inspections, replacing batteries and installing smoke alarms as needed.

The (Town/City) campaign is part of an effort to reach out to local residents, including seniors, young people and residents of neighborhoods, who are vulnerable to fire deaths. Installing smoke alarms in the homes of (Town/City) residents who don't have them will increase their odds of surviving a home fire.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), the international nonprofit safety advocate and official sponsor of Fire Prevention Week for more than 80 years, roughly 70 percent of home fire deaths in the country result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms. "Smoke alarms are the most effective early warning device there is," says Sharon Gamache, executive director of NFPA's Center for High-Risk Outreach. "Just having a smoke alarm in your home cuts your chance of dying in a fire nearly in half."

"Our goal is to make sure residents have the protection of a smoke alarm," says (Your Name, Title, Organization). "Because smoke alarms alone won't prevent every fire death, our project includes educating residents to have a home fire escape plan so they know what to do if the smoke alarm sounds."

During the smoke alarm installation program, local firefighters and community volunteers will fan out through the area, visiting residents in (List towns or neighborhoods). Residents who wish to schedule a home visit should call (Name) at (Number). Local funding for the installation program was provided by (List local funders).

"Fire can grow and spread through a home in a matter of minutes," says Judy Comoletti, NFPA's assistant vice president for public education. "That's why the advance warning provided by smoke alarms can be essential to saving lives. By participating in this community smoke alarm installation, (Your Fire Department) is helping to ensure that local residents are safer in their homes."

Keys to Success



Spotlight: Partnerships

When it comes to getting smoke alarms into the homes of vulnerable older adults, the state of Virginia is tops. Since 2000, state agencies and fire prevention groups have installed more than 3,800 smoke alarms, and provided NFPA's *Remembering When: A Fire and Fall Prevention Program for Older Adults™* to more than 6,500 older adults. What's Virginia's secret? A unique partnership with so-called AAAs, or Area Agencies on Aging. A statewide program called Get Alarmed Virginia, now funded by the Virginia Department of Health, is conducted through nine different AAAs. "They are providing services at the local level, so they're able to reach a huge number of seniors in the state," explains Carol Cooper Driskill, a program director with the Virginia Department of Aging. "In turn, the agencies are partnering with their local fire departments. It's been wonderful."

To order a *Remembering When* program or supporting brochures go to www.nfpacatalog.org.

Step 6: Recruit Volunteers

Your ability to recruit and provide training to volunteers will play a big part in determining just how successful your smoke alarm installation project is. The more volunteers you have, the more houses your team members will be able to visit. And while numbers are important, quality is key as well. You'll be visiting the homes of some of the more vulnerable members of your community. You'll want to make absolutely sure that the volunteers you recruit are both trustworthy and accountable.

First of all, you'll need to develop a strategy for recruiting volunteers. Here are some tips:

Fire department first

As we've stressed throughout this guide, fire department participation is essential to an effective smoke alarm installation project. Depending on the department's level of commitment, the fire chief may be willing to assign on-duty firefighters to the task (Of course, be prepared for them to leave quickly in the event of an emergency). Off-duty firefighters can also be called on to help.

Start with your planning committee

Groups involved in planning your smoke alarm installation project are a good source of volunteers, from the staff members of health and safety organizations to members of local chapters of service organizations such as The Lions Clubs International and Rotary International.

Target the community

Very likely, there are groups in your community that share your mission of fire safety and prevention, but aren't involved in the actual planning of the event. Supplying volunteers to help with the installation of smoke alarms is a relatively easy way for these groups to support your efforts.

Branch out—with care

With the proper training, all sorts of people can serve as volunteers on your installation team. Installation campaigns across the country have circulated their appeals for volunteers via radio, television, even light posts.



Step 7: Provide Your Volunteers with the Necessary Training, Tools and Materials

You've assembled enough volunteers to fan out across the area you've chosen to check smoke alarms, install new ones and replace batteries as needed. So how do you make sure that your volunteer force is up to the task? Simple: train them. You'll want to ensure that your helpers understand how to install smoke alarms correctly and can speak about the purpose of the program and about fire safety in general.

Installation 101

Thanks to enhanced features, testing your smoke alarm to ensure that it works can be as easy as using a TV remote control. And thanks to advanced warning systems, alarms are more easily seen or heard, even by people with vision and hearing problems. Most successful campaigns recommend conducting a thorough training session before the big day. The top lesson on the agenda: how to install a smoke alarm. To make sure your training covers the basics, follow the suggested Installation Training Agenda on page 17.

Firefighters lead the way

Ask firefighters to help you conduct the training. Have them break down the installation process into simple steps that can be easily replicated.

Training volunteers to lead

If you are relying on on-duty firefighters to lead the installation teams, be sure you're prepared in the event of an emergency (one that requires them to leave the installation project to do what they do best: fight fires). You'll want to make sure that your volunteers can step up to the challenge if there are no firefighters present.

Role-play the day

While you'll want to check on the knowledge and installation skills of

your volunteers, their 'people skills' are key as well. Do role-playing activities to make sure that they can explain the program in a friendly and knowledgeable way.

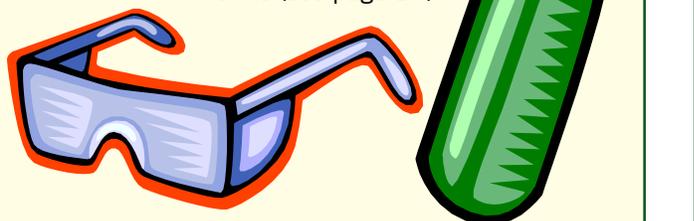
Have materials ready

Chances are, you'll want to have some materials to distribute to the residents of the homes you're visiting. Many of these are available online at www.nfpa.org. Under 'Research & Reports' navigation bar, click on 'Fact Sheets' and then 'Fire Prevention Equipment'. Make sure you have brochures, fact sheets and home fire escape plans ready before the big day.

Tools for success

Whether you end up with donated alarms and batteries, or purchase them yourself, you'll need to divide them among your volunteers when installation day finally arrives. In addition, you may also want to consider supplying your volunteers with the following:

- Cordless drills and screwdrivers
- Safety goggles
- Safety step stools
- Liability release forms (see page 13)
- Installation survey forms (see page 14)



Smoke Alarms with Special Features

Many smoke alarm models now come equipped with enhanced features so that they can be more easily tested, even by people with vision and hearing problems.

Escape Light: When the smoke alarm sounds, an escape light is also activated, helping you to exit the area.

Alarms with Strobe Lights: Some alarms come equipped with strobe lights to alert people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Lithium Batteries and 10-Year Power Cells: Alarms that use these power sources can operate for up to 10 years without requiring a change of battery.

Combination Alarms: A smoke alarm and carbon monoxide alarm are in one unit. Make sure to note the difference between the sound of each alarm.

Remote-Controlled Testing Buttons: No need to climb up on a ladder—smoke alarms with this feature allow you to use most standard TV/VCR remote controls to test your smoke alarm.

Hush Buttons: This feature allows you to temporarily silence the smoke alarm in the event of a "nuisance" alarm (cooking smoke that is not fire-related, for example). Depressing the hush button automatically switches the alarm to a reduced sensitivity condition for a limited period of time. If a real fire occurs, and the quantity of smoke reaching the smoke alarm is sufficient, the alarm will sound.

Survey Form for Smoke Alarm Installation Program

Your volunteers will need some means of keeping track of the work they've done. This installation survey from NFPA will allow them to record important information about the residence they've visited, as well as the number of alarms they've installed or batteries they've replaced.

www.nfpa.org/assets/files/PDF/installationsurvey.pdf

FIRE Act Grant Smoke Alarm Installation Survey Form	
1. Date:	11. Was there a smoke alarm outside each sleeping area? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Installer's Name:	12. How many smoke alarms did you test? <input type="checkbox"/> zero <input type="checkbox"/> one <input type="checkbox"/> two <input type="checkbox"/> three or more How many ____
3. Occupant's Name:	13. How many alarms did not work? <input type="checkbox"/> zero <input type="checkbox"/> one <input type="checkbox"/> two <input type="checkbox"/> three or more How many ____
4. Street Address:	14. If smoke alarms did not work, please indicate how many alarms had the following problem(s): <input type="checkbox"/> battery was disconnected _____ <input type="checkbox"/> battery was dead _____ <input type="checkbox"/> battery was missing _____ <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) _____
5. Town:	15. How many smoke alarms were more than 10 years old? <input type="checkbox"/> zero <input type="checkbox"/> one <input type="checkbox"/> two <input type="checkbox"/> three or more How many ____
6. Type of Residence: <input type="checkbox"/> one family <input type="checkbox"/> 2-family (duplex) <input type="checkbox"/> apartment <input type="checkbox"/> manufactured home (mobile home)	16. How many batteries did you replace? <input type="checkbox"/> zero <input type="checkbox"/> one <input type="checkbox"/> two <input type="checkbox"/> three or more How many ____
7. Number of levels in the home: <input type="checkbox"/> one <input type="checkbox"/> two <input type="checkbox"/> three or more How many ____	17. How many new smoke alarms did you install? <input type="checkbox"/> zero <input type="checkbox"/> one <input type="checkbox"/> two <input type="checkbox"/> three or more How many ____
8. How many smoke alarms were in the home before you installed new alarms? (If zero, please skip to Question 16.) <input type="checkbox"/> zero <input type="checkbox"/> one <input type="checkbox"/> two <input type="checkbox"/> three or more How many ____	18. What safety information did you leave with the home's occupant? Please specify: _____ _____
9. Was there at least one smoke alarm on every level of the home? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	19. Did you help occupant find two ways out of every room? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
10. If "no", which level(s) did not have a smoke alarm? <input type="checkbox"/> basement <input type="checkbox"/> first floor <input type="checkbox"/> second floor <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) _____	20. Did you help occupant select an outside meeting place? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

10/19/04

List of service organizations

Service organizations are a great source of volunteers. Here's a list of some of the better known clubs, and their national offices. Contact them to identify a branch near you.

The Association of Junior Leagues International Inc.
90 William Street, Suite 200
New York, NY 10038
212.951.8300
www.ajli.org

100 Black Men of America
141 Auburn Avenue
Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 688-5100
www.100blackmen.org

Benevolent & Protective Order of the Elks of the USA
2750 N. Lakeview Avenue
Chicago, IL 60614-1889
(773) 755-4700
www.elks.org

Fraternal Order of Eagles
1623 Gateway Circle S.
Grove City, OH 43123
(614) 883-2200
www.foe.com

Kiwanis International
3636 Woodview Trace
Indianapolis, IN 46268-3196
(317) 875-8755
www.kiwanis.org

Knights of Columbus Headquarters
1 Columbus Plaza
New Haven, CT 06510
(203) 752-4000
www.kofc.org

Lions Clubs International Headquarters
300 W 22nd St.
Oak Brook IL 60523-8842
(630) 571-5466
www.lionsclubs.org

Rotary International
One Rotary Center
1560 Sherman Ave.
Evanston, IL 60201
(847) 866-3000
www.rotary.org

Training Tips

Tools for Volunteers

Smoke Alarms: Be sure to use smoke alarms that bear the label of an independent testing agency. When distributing alarms to the installers, be sure to keep track of the number of alarms given to each volunteer. The installer must complete surveys to account for every alarm. Additional alarms should not be given to the installer until all alarms are accounted for.

Survey & Waiver Forms: Provide forms for volunteers to complete when they visit a home. Provide installers with pens and a clipboard to make it easier to complete the forms.

Identification: All volunteers should be able to identify themselves. Consider using badges, T-shirts, jackets, or hats to identify your volunteers. Inform residents requesting an installation/inspection that they should ask to see the credentials of the installer.

Drill: If possible, have cordless drills and screwdrivers available on a loan basis for volunteers. Teach installers how to operate the drill. Be sure to recharge the drills according to manufacturer's instructions.

Drill Bits: Extra drill bits should be provided with the drill.

Safety Ladder: If possible, loan a safety ladder for the installer to use.

Dry Wall Screws: Screws designed to be used with dry wall may be easier to use than the screws and drywall anchors provided with the alarms.

Batteries: If an installer discovers an alarm with missing or dead batteries, fresh batteries can be installed and the alarm tested.

Goggles: Installers can protect their eyes from injury by wearing goggles.

Step 8: Be Prepared for Challenges— and Know How to Overcome Them

Sometimes, even the best-laid plans fail to come off, and a smoke alarm installation program is no exception. From recruiting volunteers to reaching out to the residents you want to serve, you may encounter difficulties along the way. To help you overcome these bumps in the road, we've asked some campaign experts to tell us about the hurdles that they encountered, and how they overcame them.

Problem: Too Few Volunteers

When Cackie Joyner, training coordinator for the Occupational and Environmental Safety Office at Duke University, set out to help plan Durham, NC's first ever smoke alarm installation, she had an ambitious plan to recruit more than 100 volunteers. But while her efforts garnered tons of local publicity, she had trouble getting people to make a commitment. And on the big day: disaster. Many volunteers who'd signed up to participate didn't show at all. "The volunteers were supposed to come to a big festival we were putting on that day and have lunch. We were kind of surprised at how many didn't show up." In the end, Joyner and her team went to Plan B: They brought fire trucks into designated areas and had volunteers and firefighters canvas the neighborhoods. "It worked," says Joyner. "But it would have been more fun for me if there had been hundreds of thousands of volunteers!"

Problem: Trouble Reaching Designated Recipients

The Camden-Gloucester County SAFE KIDS Coalition in southern New Jersey had a plan. With the help of a grant, the group identified 145 children in Camden who were both low-income, and suffered from moderate to profound hearing loss, then offered to provide each family with specially designed smoke alarms for the hearing impaired and install them free of charge. But to the frustration of coordinator Valerie Chapman, the group had trouble reaching the people they'd hoped to help. "The population wasn't responsive. Even when we went through the schools, we didn't get a response, or the families wouldn't agree." The solution: Organizers ultimately relaxed their criteria in order to boost the number of participants in the program. "We ended up opening it up to anyone who met the hearing impairment part," says Chapman.

Problem: Residents Live in Apartments

Peggy Harrell and her team of fire safety advocates in Plano, TX, wanted to install smoke alarms in the homes of older adults but they had a problem: Many older adults in Plano live in apartment complexes, and installing smoke alarms is the province of the landlord or building supervisor. "We can't go door-to-door in the apartments," says Harrell. "Instead we're working with building maintenance and supervisors, making sure that they understand the importance of having working smoke alarms." Harrell has even applied for a grant to do a print media campaign specifically for residents of apartments.

Step 9: Evaluate Your Program

Once the big day has come and gone, you'll want to evaluate your program's success. Having completed survey forms from volunteers will facilitate this process. As you answer the following questions (and no doubt come up with a few more of your own), try to focus on ways that you might strengthen the installation project the next time around.

How many alarms did you install?

Were you able to gain access to the community or communities you were targeting?

Did you meet the installation goals you set? If not, what were the problems?

Was your effort to recruit volunteers successful?

Did you receive coverage in the local media?

What kinds of financial support did your campaign receive?

How might you conduct the project differently next time?



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Spotlight:

Keep Your Installation Program Going

The town of Deerfield, IL, has been conducting smoke alarm installation campaigns for more than 20 years. In 1983, the community, located 18 miles north of Chicago, made headlines with its ambitious effort to install alarms in every one of Deerfield's 7,000 homes. Every year since then, firefighters have paid return visits to those homes, making sure that the alarms and their batteries are still working. The key to their efforts: a huge commitment from the local fire department, says Keith Patterson, director of education and media affairs for the Deerfield-Bannockburn Fire Protection District. "Everyone in the department got involved and the chief came up with incentives to get people to participate."

The incentives included allowing firefighters to wear comfortable athletic shoes, and special shorts and T-shirts that identified who they were. Since the success of that initial effort, civic and community groups have joined the cause, raising money to support the initiative. "It's important to think outside the box and be persistent," says Patterson. **Reminder:** Smoke alarms are only good for 10 years. After 10 years, the entire unit needs to be replaced. Here are other ideas to keep your installers motivated:

- Recognition certificates
- Gift certificates
- A recognition breakfast, lunch or dinner
- Having installers featured on your web site

Training Tips

Sample Smoke Alarm Installation Training Agenda

This sample agenda will help make sure that you cover the basics when training volunteers.

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Objectives of the project
3. Local smoke alarm requirements and placement of smoke alarms
4. Features of the smoke alarm you will be using for your project
5. Demonstration and practice of smoke alarm installation and testing
6. Respectful interaction with residents
7. Using the survey form
8. Using the waiver form
9. Fire safety and fire escape information
10. Review of all handouts
11. Program plan and coordination
12. Other issues

Need help putting together a presentation for your team? Go to the Web site below to download a PowerPoint presentation, used by NFPA professionals to conduct smoke alarm installation trainings across the country. It covers the basics and is ready to go.

www.nfpa.org/alarminstall

Safety Tips

Share these life-saving tips with residents as you install new alarms for them, or change the batteries in existing alarms.

- Once the alarm sounds, you may have as few as two minutes to escape.
- Test your smoke alarms once a month, following the manufacturer's instructions.
- Replace the batteries in your smoke alarm once a year, or as soon as the alarm "chirps" warning that the battery is low. Hint: schedule battery replacements for the same day you change your clocks from daylight saving time to standard time in the fall.
- Never "borrow" a battery from a smoke alarm. Smoke alarms can't warn you of fire if their batteries are missing or have been disconnected.
- Don't disable smoke alarms even temporarily. If your smoke alarm is sounding "nuisance alarms," try relocating it farther from the kitchen or bathroom, where cooking fumes or steam can cause the alarm to sound.
- Regularly vacuuming or dusting your smoke alarms, following the manufacturer's instructions, can keep them working properly.
- Smoke alarms don't last forever. Replace yours once every 10 years. If you can't remember how old the alarm is, then it's probably time for a new one.
- Consider installing smoke alarms with "long-life" (10-year) batteries.
- Plan regular fire drills to ensure that everyone knows exactly what to do when the smoke alarm sounds. Hold a drill at night to make sure that sleeping family members awaken at the sound of the alarm. Some studies have shown that some children may not awaken to the sound of the smoke alarm. Know what your child will do before a fire occurs.



A guide—to saving lives

We hope that this guide to conducting a community-wide smoke alarm installation program has provided you with the facts, tips and training tools you will need. As you can see, the kind of installation program you plan and implement will depend on the nature of the community in which you live. But whether you're in a sparsely populated rural area, a teeming metropolis, or somewhere in between, your smoke alarm installation program will depend on one essential component: your initiative. So start planning—and saving lives—today.

YOUR LOGO

XYZ Fire Department

Certificate of Recognition
presented to

_____ Name _____

*for serving as a volunteer for
the smoke alarm installation program.*

_____ Fire Department _____ Coalition Partner _____

_____ Date _____

Recognize your volunteers at an event. Create a certificate for each volunteer using your own logo.

NFPA products

Here are NFPA materials you can use to support your project.



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or www.nfpacatalog.org**



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e-mail
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mail

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(617)-984-7274
(617)-984-7222
NFPA

Public Education Division
One Batterymarch Park
Quincy, MA 02169

NFPA Web sites

www.nfpa.org
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www.losbuenosrecuerdos.org
www.riskwatch.org
www.sparky.org



NFPA PUBLIC EDUCATION DIVISION

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