



Marion County Board of County Commissioners Marion County Fire Rescue

2631 SE 3rd Street
Ocala, FL 34471

www.marioncountvfl.org/firerescue.htm



Contact: Heather Danenhower, Public Relations Manager, Marion County Fire Rescue
Office: (352) 291-8094 ▪ Pager: (352) 898-3570

CHANGE YOUR CLOCKS, CHANGE YOUR BATTERIES THIS SUNDAY

Immediate Release

MARION COUNTY, Fla. (March 2, 2009) – When the clocks spring ahead an hour Sunday, March 8, Marion County Fire Rescue (MCFR) encourages citizens to also change the batteries in their smoke alarms.

Most people die in house fires not because of the flames but because of the deadly carbon monoxide smoke. People inhale the toxins, go to sleep and often never wake up. But if people have working smoke alarms, they are more than 70-percent more likely to escape a fire unharmed. Sadly, most smoke alarms don't work because of missing, dead or disconnected batteries or poor maintenance.

To encourage citizens to change the batteries in their smoke alarms on Sunday, MCFR is sending postcard reminders (see attached) to citizens who've taken advantage of MCFR's "Get Alarmed" smoke alarm program.

MCFR's "Get Alarmed" smoke alarm program is considered one of the most aggressive in the state, maybe even the nation. MCFR provides two dual-mode smoke alarms to citizens who cannot afford them and installs them for citizens free of charge. Dual-mode smoke alarms feature two smoke detection technologies: ionization and photoelectric.

Ionization technology reacts better to fast, flaming fires whereas photoelectric alarms respond better to slow, smoldering fires. MCFR recommends the dual-mode alarms to provide double the protection. Grant money and fees collected from illegal backyard burning fund MCFR's "Get Alarmed" smoke alarm program. For more information on the program, call (352) 291-8000 and follow these safety tips:

- Replace smoke alarm batteries at least twice a year when the time changes or when the low battery alarm chirps.
- Test and inspect each smoke alarm at least once a month to make sure it's working properly.
- Replace smoke alarms every 10 years.
- Never "borrow" a battery from your smoke alarms because you will likely forget to replace it.
- Install at least one smoke alarm on every floor of your home, inside every sleeping area and in common areas such as a hallway and living room.
- Mount smoke alarms four to 11 inches from the ceiling on walls or on the ceiling.
- Don't install smoke alarms near windows, in corners, outside doors or near air ducts where drafts might interfere.
- Brainstorm a fire escape plan and practice it at least twice a year, identifying two exits from every room and establishing a safe meeting place outside.

###