



# Marion County Board of County Commissioners Marion County Fire Rescue

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[www.marioncountyfl.org/firerescue.htm](http://www.marioncountyfl.org/firerescue.htm)



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## **CHANGE YOUR CLOCKS; CHANGE YOUR BATTERIES THIS SUNDAY**

Immediate Release

**MARION COUNTY, Fla.** (Oct. 28, 2009) – When the clocks fall back an hour this Sunday, Nov. 1, Marion County Fire Rescue (MCFR) encourages citizens to also change the batteries in their smoke alarms.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), between 2003 and 2006, 40 percent of fire deaths occurred in homes without smoke alarms. In 23 percent of home fire deaths during this same time period, the smoke alarms that were in the home failed to sound. Sadly, most smoke alarms don't work because of missing, dead or disconnected batteries or poor maintenance.

If citizens can't afford smoke alarms, they are encouraged to contact MCFR and ask about the department's "Get Alarmed" program. MCFR's "Get Alarmed" smoke alarm program is an aggressive initiative that provides and installs two dual-mode smoke alarms to citizens who cannot afford them free of charge. 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.

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 remember to follow these safety tips to keep yourself and your family and friends safe:

- 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 hallways and living rooms.
- 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 with your family at least twice a year, identifying two exits from every room and establishing a safe meeting place outside.

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