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(S.D.)-Change Your Clock, Check Your Batteries This Weekend

By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 10/31/2012 08:52 AM



(PIERRE, S.D.)-South Dakota State Fire Marshal Paul Merriman plans to use part of the hour he'll gain when Daylight Saving Time ends this weekend to check the smoke-alarm batteries at his home. He encourages everyone else to do the same thing. Daylight Saving Time ends on Sunday, November 4th. That's when clocks are set back an hour. Merriman suggests individuals mark the change by not only moving their clocks back, but also checking the batteries in their smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.

"This clock-change weekend is a good reminder to make sure your detectors are in working order," Merriman said. "A majority of home fire deaths could be prevented if all homes had working smoke detectors. Some statistics say up to 80 percent of child deaths in fires occur in homes without working smoke alarms. Please make sure your family doesn't become part of that statistic."

For individuals who don't have smoke detectors in their home, Merriman recommends installing some. Smoke detectors have a test button. When the button is pressed, the detector should make a sound. If it doesn't, the batteries need to be changed. If new batteries don't do the trick, it's time to replace the detector.

Merriman offers these additional guidelines for keeping families safe from fire.

- At least once a month, press the test button to check your detector.
 - For maximum protection, install smoke detectors on every level of your home.
 - Smoke detectors lose sensitivity over time and should be replaced periodically. Smoke detectors are usually good for about 10 years.
- Periodically clean smoke detectors using a vacuum attachment. This removes particles that could interfere with the detector's proper operation.
- Finally, brush up on your family's emergency exit plan. If your family doesn't have a plan, this is an ideal time to develop one.

--Department of Public Safety