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Make fire safety part of fall home checklist

It's time to get alarmed. According to a new survey, most American homes don't have enough smoke or carbon monoxide detectors.

About two-thirds of homes don't meet the national recommendation for the number of smoke alarms set by the National Fire Protection Association, said the nationwide survey conducted by First Alert. Only one in 10 homes meets the recommendations for carbon monoxide monitors.

The association recommends at least one carbon monoxide alarm on each level of a house and one in or near every bedroom or sleeping area. For smoke alarms, one should be installed at the top of each staircase, and one in every bedroom or sleeping area, under the guidelines. For an average two-story, three-bedroom house, that adds up to four smoke alarms and five carbon monoxide alarms. (For details, see www.nfpa.org).

Need more reasons to get fired up? According to the U.S. Fire Administration, 84 percent of all civilian fire deaths occur at private residences. Each year, nearly 3,000 Americans die in home fires and about 450 succumb to carbon monoxide poisoning.

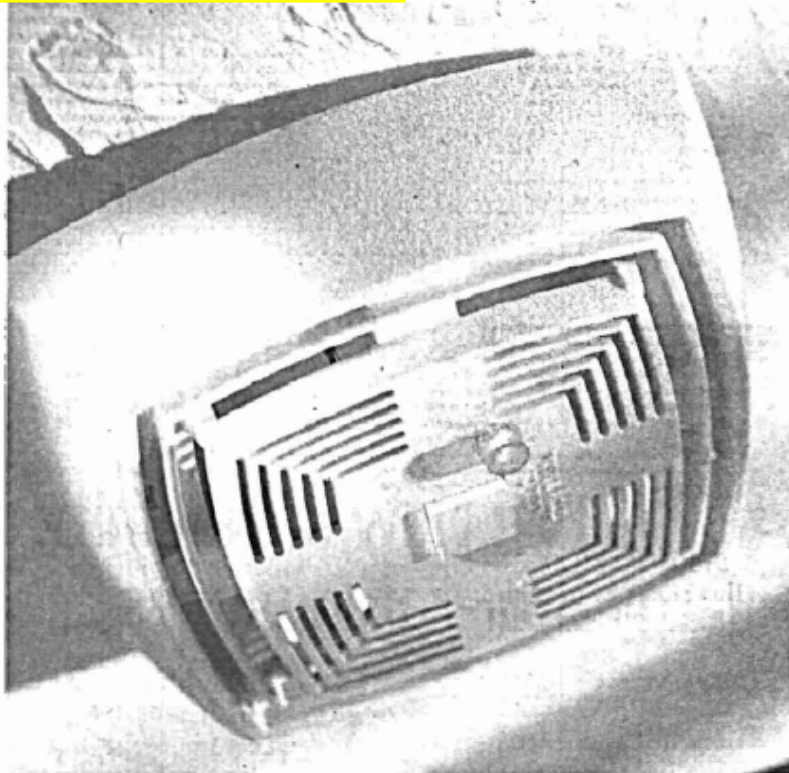
Experts recommend installing smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors and checking the batteries once a month to make sure they work.

Protection One, another home-security company, recommends that families practice fire drills so they know what to do when the alarm goes

off. Devise an escape plan, and post it where it's visible at all times.

For more tips and a home safety checklist, click on www.firstalert.com/safety-checklist.php.

Story by Debbie Arrington, McClatchy Newspapers



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