



## CPSC Alert: Counterfeit Smoke Alarms Distributed in Atlanta

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is urging consumers in the Atlanta area to check their homes for counterfeit smoke alarms. About 18,500 counterfeit photoelectric smoke alarms were distributed for free in the Atlanta area between 2006 through May 2011 as part of the Atlanta Smoke Alarm Program. The smoke alarms can fail to alert consumers in the event of a fire.

The Atlanta Fire Rescue Department, which distributed the free smoke alarms as part of a fire safety campaign, is recalling the smoke alarms and is working to provide free smoke alarm inspections and replacement units. Consumers who received these alarms should immediately contact the Atlanta Smoke Alarm Recall Hotline at (404) 546-2733.

The counterfeit alarms can be identified by a silver Underwriters Laboratories' UL label on the back and three sets of vented slots on the front. The UL label is counterfeit. The alarms do not have a model number or brand name printed on them. "Important: Refer to Manual for Operating Instruction and Safety" and "Do Not Paint" are stamped into the plastic on the front of the alarm in both English and German. The package states, "This Smoke Alarm save [sic] life and property by early warning!" Claims that smoke alarms can "save property" are not typical claims for smoke alarms. The packaging states, "10 YEAR LIFE LITHIUM BATTERY," but the battery included with the smoke alarm is a carbon zinc, industrial, heavy duty battery, which will power the alarm for only one year.

CPSC's independent testing of the smoke alarms determined that the alarms pose a life safety hazard to the occupants in the event of a fire. The alarms perform poorly and inconsistently and do not meet voluntary standards requirements in Underwriters Laboratories' (UL) 217, Single and Multiple Station Smoke Alarms and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 72, Fire Alarm and Signaling Code. The smoke alarms' sensitivity settings varied greatly between the alarms tested. Some alarms did not respond within an adequate time for life safety and other alarms did not respond at all.

CPSC has worked with the voluntary standards organizations to improve smoke alarm performance and reliability. Counterfeit alarms can put lives at risk. Working smoke alarms that meet the voluntary standards are proven to save lives. CPSC urges consumers to install smoke alarms on every level of the home, outside sleeping areas and inside bedrooms. Replace batteries at least once every year and test the alarms once a month.



**Counterfeit UL Label**