

City of Bristol Tennessee

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Change Batteries in Smoke and Carbon Monoxide

Alarms This Weekend

The Bristol Tennessee Fire Department and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) are encouraging citizens to use the switch to Daylight Savings Time as a reminder to replace batteries in their smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms. Daylight Savings Time begins on Sunday, March 11 this year and Bristol Tennessee Fire Chief, Bob Barnes, stresses the importance of maintaining fresh batteries in both smoke and CO alarms as properly operating early warning devices save lives. Fresh batteries allow smoke and CO alarms to do their jobs of alerting families of a fire or a buildup of deadly carbon monoxide in their homes.

- **An estimated 374,900 residential building fires are reported to U.S. fire departments each year and cause an estimated 2,630 deaths, 13,075 injuries, and \$7.6 billion in property loss.**

Two-thirds of fire deaths occur in homes where smoke alarms are not installed, or where alarms are either improperly installed or not properly maintained. Fire officials recommend testing early warning alarms once a month and replacing batteries at least twice a year. City codes require smoke alarms on every level of your home, centrally located outside bedrooms; and require a smoke detector installed inside each bedroom.

CPSC estimates an **annual average of 183 unintentional, non-fire CO poisoning deaths** associated with consumer products between 2006 and 2008. Assistant Fire Chief, Jack Spurgeon emphasizes that poisonous CO is called the invisible killer. "Because it is both colorless and odorless; these characteristics allow CO to kill people without warning since there are no sensory alerts to high levels of CO," said Spurgeon. Carbon monoxide is produced by the incomplete burning of fuel in various products, including furnaces, portable generators, fireplaces, cars and charcoal grills. The fire department recommends a CO alarm to be placed on each level of a home and placed outside of each sleeping area.

For more emergency safety information, call the Bristol TN Fire Department at (423) 989-5701.