

10-Minute Mini-Lesson



Topic: Smoke Alarms: Make Them Work for You!

Audience: Adults who would benefit from basic information about smoke alarms.

Lesson Objective: By the end of the mini-lesson, attendees will be able to:

- Identify the importance of working smoke alarms.
- Explain three behaviors necessary to ensure smoke alarms can serve as life-saving devices.

Educational Messages to Review:

Ch. 1: Home Smoke Alarms

- 1.1 Fire Deaths — Smoke Alarms Save Lives
- 1.2 Installation
- 1.3 Testing and Maintenance
- 1.4 People Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- 1.5 Battery Replacement
- 1.6 Smoke Alarm Replacement

Step 1: Introduction (2 Minutes)

- Greet the participants and thank them for allowing you to speak for 10 minutes.
- Introduce yourself and share your connection to the community. Explain the purpose of your visit: "Today, we will talk about why having working smoke alarms is crucial to your safety and the safety of your loved ones. We will also talk about how to care for and maintain your smoke alarms."
- **HOOK:** Did you know that roughly 60% of home fire deaths happen in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms?
- Encourage the audience to participate actively by asking them to close their eyes and envision a scenario: "Imagine you're asleep in your home when suddenly, a fire starts."
ASK: "Did you know that you may have less than two minutes to escape your home once the smoke alarm sounds? One hundred twenty seconds!"
- Emphasize that "Fire moves fast, and every second counts. Working smoke alarms give you early warning so you can get outside quickly. Working smoke alarms cut the risk of dying in a home fire in half. Now let's talk about smoke alarms and how to make them work for you."



Optional:

Share a brief news article about a fatal fire in which non-working smoke alarms were in place.



Step 2: Body of the Presentation (7 minutes)

Installation

- Smoke alarms should be installed on every level of the home (including the basement), outside each sleeping area, and inside each bedroom.
- For the best protection, interconnect all the smoke alarms so when one sounds, they all sound. It is important to have interconnected smoke alarms if you sleep with the bedroom doors closed.
- A smoke alarm should be on the ceiling or high on a wall.

Types of Smoke Alarms

- It is important to buy smoke alarms that are listed by a qualified testing laboratory.
- The two most common types of smoke alarms are ionization and photoelectric.
- For the best protection or where extra time is needed to wake up or help others, both types or dual sensor ionization-photoelectric alarms are recommended.
- An ionization alarm is more responsive to flaming fires, and a photoelectric smoke alarm is more responsive to smoldering fires.
- Photoelectric smoke alarms are the best type of alarms to be installed near the kitchen and bathrooms to reduce nuisance alarms.
- Make sure smoke alarms meet the needs of all family members, including those with sensory or physical disabilities.

Testing

- Test all smoke alarms at least once a month by pushing the test button.
- Demonstrate how to test a smoke alarm and what to do if it fails the test.

Maintenance

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning to keep the smoke alarms working.
- Smoke alarms with non-replaceable (long-life) batteries are designed to remain effective for up to 10 years. If the smoke alarm chirps, warning that the battery is low, replace the entire smoke alarm right away.
- For smoke alarms without non-replaceable (long-life) batteries, replace batteries at least once a year. If the alarm chirps, replace the battery.
- Replace smoke alarms when they are 10 years old or if they don't respond when tested.

Step 3: Conclusion (1 minute)

- Recap the key points: installation, testing, and maintenance.
- Remind participants that having working smoke alarms cuts the risk of dying in a home fire in half. Fire is fast and having working smoke alarms gives you early warning so you can get outside quickly. When the smoke alarm sounds, get outside and stay outside! Go to your outside meeting place.
- Distribute the NFPA "Smoke Alarms: Make Them Work for You!" tip sheet to all participants.
- Encourage participants to share this information with their friends and family to ensure their homes are properly protected.

Optional Ideas:

- **Visual Demonstrations:** Use props or visual aids, such as a smoke alarm, batteries, or diagrams, to demonstrate key concepts like installation, testing, and maintenance. Hands-on demonstrations can increase participant understanding and improve knowledge retention.
- **Interactive Quiz:** Incorporate a brief quiz with multiple-choice or true/false questions related to smoke alarms. This can be a fun way to test participants' knowledge and encourage active participation.
- **Story Sharing:** Encourage participants to share their own stories related to smoke alarms and fire safety. This can provide real-life examples of the importance of smoke alarms in different situations.

