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# MEDIA ALERT

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Make Your Time Matter: Change Your Clock, Check Your Battery**

**RICHMOND, VIRGINIA:** This weekend, March 13 and 14, we will all be setting our clocks to Daylight Saving Time. The time change is a good reminder to check your smoke alarms. A working smoke alarm significantly increases your chances of surviving a deadly home fire.

A properly installed and maintained smoke alarm is the only thing in your home that can alert you and your family to a fire 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Whether you're awake or asleep, a working smoke alarm is constantly on alert, scanning the air for fire and smoke. Smoke alarms *must* be maintained! A smoke alarm with a dead or missing battery is the same as having no smoke alarm at all, so test your smoke alarm monthly by pushing the "test" button, if it has one.

Smoke alarms are powered by either a battery or are hardwired into your home's electrical system. Hardwired smoke alarms are usually equipped with a backup battery. If your smoke alarm is powered by battery, the battery needs to be replaced annually unless it is a long-life battery (check the owner's manual). All batteries should be maintained and replaced in accordance with manufacturer's guidance.

Choose an annual date, such as the time change, when you will remember to maintain your smoke alarm in tip top condition. Check the manufacturer's expiration date on the label, replace the batteries if needed, and clean dust away from the slots so that smoke can enter freely. All smoke alarms, hard-wired and battery powered, should be replaced every ten years. These simple steps will help ensure that you and your family will have the best chance of surviving if fire should strike.

"[Smoke alarms](#) with batteries that are dead, disconnected, or missing will not alert a person to the dangers of smoke and fire," said W. G. Billy Shelton, Jr., Executive Director of VDFP. "Therefore, it is important that these [life-saving devices](#) are checked frequently to ensure proper functioning."

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