

As clocks jump forward residents reminded to test alarms

March 5, 2020 — With clocks rolling forward one hour at 3 a.m. on Sunday, March 8, residents may lose an hour's sleep, but they don't need to lose peace of mind when it comes to home fire safety.

St. Catharines Fire Services are reminding residents that with the changing of the clocks they should be taking time to test the smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in their homes.

"Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are proven to save lives, but only if they are in working order," said Fire Chief Jeff McCormick, adding, "the changing of the clocks is a perfect reminder for residents to test alarms and replace their batteries. This simple process will ensure that in the event of a fire, these devices work properly to notify residents of a problem and provide valuable time to evacuate the building and implement their home-escape plan."

Residents can ensure their alarms work properly by replacing the batteries every six months when the clocks change and testing them once a month. Testing should also include hard-wired electric smoke alarms. Home owners should always ensure replacement batteries are the type recommended by the manufacturer. For rental properties, owners are responsible to ensure alarms are installed and working properly. Tenants identifying any concerns with their smoke alarms or CO alarms should notify their landlord immediately for repair or replacement as applicable.

The Ontario Fire Code requires working smoke alarms on every storey of a home and outside all sleeping areas. Carbon monoxide alarms are required outside sleeping areas in homes containing a wood-burning fireplace, fuel-burning appliances such as gas furnaces, gas stoves or gas water heaters or an attached storage garage.

While testing smoke and carbon monoxide alarms is one way to ensure home safety there is more residents can do. To learn more about alarms, home escape plans, emergency preparedness and a variety of home-safety tips visit www.stcatharines.ca/Fire

Old batteries should not be thrown out in the trash. Instead they can be dropped off in the bin located outside the Market Square entrance to St. Catharines City Hall or a Niagara Region household hazardous waste drop-off depot.

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