While Smoke Alarms SAVE LIVES, they have a LIFE of their own!!!

The life expectancy of smoke alarms is generally 10 years, after which point their sensors can begin to lose sensitivity. The test button only confirms that the battery, electronics, and alert system are working; it doesn't mean that the smoke sensor is working. To test the sensor, use an aerosol can of smoke alarm test spray that simulates smoke. But even if the 17-year-old smoke alarms in your homes can still detect smoke, we recommend replacing them with new models. ---Consumer Reports, May 2014

Smoke Alarm Tips for the Home:

• **Make sure your smoke alarms are operational.** This means testing smoke alarms monthly, replacing batteries twice a year or when a low-battery alarm chirps and performing other maintenance as NFPA and your smoke alarm manufacturers recommend. *Reminder: A smoke alarm disabled because of nuisance alarms provides no protection at all.*

• **It is important to have not just one smoke alarm but smoke alarms in every location required by NFPA standards.** These shall be located on each level of your home, outside each sleeping area and inside each bedroom. Tens of millions of U.S. homes are estimated to have smoke alarms but not enough smoke alarms to meet the standards and effectively protect their homes.

• **Interconnect your smoke alarms so that a fire detected by any smoke alarm will sound an alarm at every location where a smoke alarm is installed.** Interconnection can be done using hard-wiring or wireless broadcast technology. Interconnected smoke alarms provide audible notification throughout the house, not just at the activated device.

• **Develop and practice an escape plan so that everyone in the home knows what to do if a smoke alarm sounds.** This includes planning a secondary means of evacuation from every room in your home. Every household that develops and practices an escape plan (with two ways out from every location) improves its time to escape in every type of fire encounter.

There Are Different Types of Smoke Alarm Technologies—Ionization and Photoelectric
The two most commonly recognized smoke detection technologies are ionization smoke detection and photoelectric smoke detection. Ionization smoke detection is generally more responsive to flaming fires and photoelectric smoke detection is generally more responsive to fires that begin with a long period of smoldering (called "smoldering fires"). For best protection, it is recommended by NFPA that both (ionization and photoelectric) technologies be in homes. In addition to individual ionization and photoelectric alarms, combination alarms that include both technologies in a single device are available.

Nuisance Alarms Can Be Minimized
In the past decade or so, a number of steps have been taken to reduce the likelihood of nuisance alarms, including hush features and refinements to installation rules that include guidance on safe distances from nuisance sources.

Please contact the **Foley Fire Department at (251) 943-1266** if you have any smoke alarm related questions. For more information go to www.nfpa.org/smokealarms