



City of Grand Prairie Fire Department Residential Smoke Alarm Troubleshooting

For years, smoke alarms have been required to be powered from a home's power supply with a battery backup to prevent deaths from non-working smoke alarms due to dead batteries.

New smoke alarms must have 10-year batteries that last the life of the smoke alarm. After 10 years, the entire smoke alarm must be replaced.

Smoke alarms must be interconnected so that if one sounds, all sound to alert everyone in the home to evacuate.

Smoke alarms malfunction, most often at the end of their service life when they must be replaced. When this happens, they begin to "chirp". If this happens, the following steps are recommended:

1. Check all devices to make sure that none are 10 years old. If any are, replace them! Remember that you must replace a hard-wired smoke alarm with another hard-wired. If one is not plugged in, they will all keep chirping!



2. Make sure that the breaker to the smoke alarm circuit, or multiple circuits that provide power to the smoke alarms, is turned on.

3. Replace all batteries in all smoke alarms if yours have replaceable batteries. Make sure that you find them all and change them! Remember, if you miss one, the chirping will likely continue.
4. If you do all of this and the chirping continues, you have a bad smoke alarm. It may be dirty, have malfunctioned, or be broken. If you cannot figure out which one is bad, they must all be replaced.
5. If the smoke alarm is less than 10 years old and has a new battery (if it doesn't have a permanent 10-year battery), it can be vacuumed clean, possibly stopping the chirping. If that still doesn't work, it must be replaced.