

THURSDAY 3 OCTOBER 2024

TIME TO SPRING FORWARD AND CHECK YOUR SMOKE ALARMS, SAYS RACV AND CFA

As Victorians prepare to wind their clocks forward for daylight saving this weekend, RACV and the Country Fire Authority (CFA) are reminding residents of the importance of checking their smoke alarms. This simple act could be the difference between life and death in the event of a house fire.

RACV Head of Policy James Williams said with an average of 3,000 house fires in Victoria each year, the importance of functional smoke alarms cannot be overstated.

"RACV is urging everyone to take a moment this weekend to ensure you have reliable smoke alarms installed at your home," Mr Williams said.

"An operational smoke alarm can allow us the precious seconds we need to evacuate safely in the event of a fire emergency.

"If you're unsure how your smoke alarm works, or unable to install or change an alarm yourself, seeking a qualified professional to do the job is the best thing you can do."

RACV reminds tenants that while rental providers are responsible for maintaining smoke alarms, it's crucial to report any concerns promptly with your property manager. CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan also stressed the importance of regularly testing smoke alarms to ensure they work properly.

"Without a working smoke alarm, you may not wake up in time to escape safely in the event of a fire," Mr Heffernan said.

"We recommend testing your alarms monthly. It'll take only a few minutes of your day and could save lives.

"The more coverage of smoke alarms you have in the home, the more likely you are to wake up, so have them installed in the bedroom, living area, the hallway, even the games room, you can't have too many.

"It's a good idea to install smoke alarms powered by 10-year lithium batteries, a small investment that will provide reliable protection for a decade."

The Country Fire Authority (CFA) recommends:

- Monthly checks of all smoke alarms.
- Installing alarms powered by 10-year lithium batteries.

- Interconnecting alarms throughout the home.
- Placing alarms in every bedroom, living area, and hallway.

Signs your smoke alarms need attention include the following warning signs:

- Yellowing of the alarm unit.
- Continuous 'chirping' sounds.
- Unexplained activations.

This reminder follows on from a [recent partnership between RACV and CFA](#), who partnered earlier this year to provide free smoke alarms and education to 500 at-risk individuals across rural and regional Victoria. This program equipped households with life-saving devices and spread vital knowledge about fire prevention and safety in the home.

For more information on smoke alarm safety and fire prevention, visit cfa.vic.gov.au or for assistance with smoke alarm installation, visit racv.com/trades.

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Further information

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