

Check smoke alarms when resetting clocks

The clocks go ahead one hour this weekend to mark the start of daylight time, and Caledon Fire and Emergency Services are reminding residents it's a good time to check other things, such as making sure electric and battery-operated smoke alarms are working properly.

Clocks officially go forward one hour this Sunday (March 11) at 2 a.m. The Fire department suggests when changing the clocks, it's also a good time change the batteries in both smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms in the home. All alarms should be tested monthly, and replaced after seven to 10 years, or by recommendation from the manufacturer's instructions.

For these alarms to do their job, they need to be operational. Alarms can be electrically powered, battery powered, or a combination of both. People installing electrical-powered alarms are advised to have a battery back-up in case of power failures.

"In a fire, every second counts," Fire Chief Darryl Bailey said. "Roughly half of home fire deaths result from fires reported at night between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. when most people are asleep. Smoke alarms can alert people to the presence of toxic smoke and give everyone an opportunity to get out alive."

Bailey also emphasized the importance of developing a home escape plan. Occupants may have less than two minutes to safely escape the toxic smoke released from a fire. Make sure everyone knows two ways out of each room and discuss an outdoor meeting place in advance.

Remember, every home in Ontario must have a working smoke alarm on every storey and outside all sleeping areas - it's the law. For more information on smoke alarms, fire safety and home escape plans, contact Caledon Fire and Emergency Services at 905-584-2272, ext. 4303, or visit www.caledon.ca/fire