NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Time to spring forward and check smoke alarms

CAMARILLO, Calif. – Ventura County Fire Department (VCFD) reminds residents to replace the batteries in their smoke alarms when they change their clocks on Sunday, March 11, Daylight Savings Time starts.

Annually, there are on average more than 2,735 fire deaths in the United States. Approximately eighty-one percent of those people died in residential structures. Smoke alarms save lives by alerting occupants of a fire before poisonous gases and deadly smoke reach them. By giving you time to escape, smoke alarms cut your risk of dying in a home fire nearly in half.

You should have a smoke alarm inside each sleeping area, in the hallways leading to the bedrooms and on each level of the home. Only functioning smoke detectors can protect you; therefore, never "borrow" a battery for another use.

 Also, it is recommended to test your smoke alarms once a month and to change the batteries in your smoke alarm at least once a year. Smoke alarms with non-replaceable 10-year batteries are designed to remain effective for up to 10 years. If the alarm chirps, warning that the battery is low, replace the entire smoke alarm right away. For the best protection, equip your home with a combination of both ionization and photoelectric smoke alarms.

Make sure everyone in your home understands the warning of the smoke alarm and knows how to respond. Finally, prepare and practice an escape plan so that you and your loved ones can get out of your home safely should there be a fire. Plan to meet in the front yard in a place where first responders can easily see you.

For more information on smoke alarm installation, testing, and maintenance, explore the Ventura County Fire Department "Smoke Alarm" fact sheet available online at www.VCFD.org

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