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Smoke Alarms are Vital to Survival by John Cherry

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You probably donâ€™t think about your smoke alarms much unless you need one. After all, you never want to notice your smoke alarm because if you do, then there is a major issue such as a fire that you must take action against. That being said, you canâ€™t just ignore your smoke alarms forever. You need to take some steps to ensure that if you ever do need them, they will be there for you.

First, do whatever you need to do to link your smoke alarms with your home security system. Most wireless systems can be expanded to allow smoke alarms to be included in the monitoring capability. You might have to upgrade your smoke alarms in order to get them connected to your home security system, but since smoke alarms are supposed to be replaced every ten years anyway, this shouldnâ€™t be too much of a burden.

Next, always replace your smoke alarm batteries twice a year. For convenienceâ€™s sake, many homeowners test their smoke alarms and replace the batteries when the clocks are turned back in the fall and forward in the spring. Itâ€™s not mandatory that you do it on these two specific days, but it is a nice way to remember to take care of this task.

You should have a family escape plan in place that specifically addresses fire. There are different actions you and your kids should take if there is a fire than if there is an intruder. Practice your plan and remind your kids:

1. To never hide. Get out of the house and do not return for any reason.

2. To feel a door with the back of the hand instead of the palm. If there is heat, do not open the door and look for another way out of the house.

3. To crawl on the ground to stay out of the smoke as much as possible.

4. To stop, drop and roll if their clothes catch on fire. Do not run or try to get the clothes off until after the fire is completely out. They should also cover their mouths and nose to keep the smoke out.

Again, practice is the key. Kids will panic if they do not know what to do at every given moment. By practicing your escape plan at least once a month, you can feel confident in knowing that your kids will do the right thing if the worst possible scenario comes to pass.

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John is a shrewd consumer who writes about personal finance, home technology and home security topics like: a security systems Houston and a security system.

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