

Fire Prevention Week 2021: Oct. 3-9

By, Mattie Jaros, Fire Lieutenant

Fire Prevention Week takes place every year in commemoration of the Great Chicago Fire from Oct. 8, 1891. During this week, fire departments throughout the country elevate their prevention messages in an effort to drastically decrease casualties caused by fires. This year, fire prevention week takes place Oct. 3-9. The National Fire Protection Association releases a concentrated theme, with this year's theme "Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety" focusing on informing the public on the different sounds that smoke and carbon monoxide alarms make. **It is important to identify the differences between the two types of alarms. Smoke alarms** work by sensing smoke and will alert you in the event of a fire, and need to be installed in every bedroom, outside sleeping areas, and on each level of your home. Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that displaces oxygen in your body and brain, causing you to become unconscious before you even realize something is happening. The displacement of oxygen in your body can lead to death in a short period of time. **Carbon monoxide alarms** sense the deadly gas and will alert you. It is important that everyone in the household understands the sounds of these two types of alarms— it could save your life!

Smoke alarms:

- A continued set of three loud beeps – *beep, beep, beep* – means the alarm is sensing smoke or fire. Get out and call 911.
- A single *chirp* every 30 or 60 seconds means the battery is low and must be changed.
- All smoke alarms must be replaced after 10 years.
- If you have replaced the battery and the alarm continues to chirp, it means that the alarm has reached the end of its life and must be replaced.

Carbon Monoxide (CO) alarms:

- A continuous set of four loud beeps – *beep, beep, beep, beep* – means carbon monoxide has been detected. Get outside and call 911.
- A single *chirp* every 30-60 seconds means the battery is low and must be replaced.
- CO alarms can also have an end-of-life sound that can vary by manufacturer. This will indicate the need to replace the alarm. If you have replaced the battery on the alarm and the chirping continues, this will indicate that the alarm needs to be replaced. ■