



## Lesson 4 - Smoke Alarms

### TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION

#### Smoke Alarms

The first consideration in creating a home fire escape plan is to ensure that working smoke alarms have been installed and maintained. A working smoke alarm will alert you if there is smoke in your home and wake you if there is a fire overnight. When you're asleep you lose your sense of smell.

By law, all residential properties in Victoria must have at least one smoke alarm installed on the ceiling of each level. Australian fire services recommend smoke alarms be installed in all living areas, hallways, bedrooms and in any rooms where someone sleeps.

Smoke alarms should be tested (by pressing the test button) monthly and dusted annually. All smoke alarms that have a 9-volt battery should have the battery replaced annually. All smoke alarms, whether hard wired or battery operated, need to be replaced every 10 years. Victoria's fire services recommend replacing them with smoke alarms that have a 10-year lithium battery in a tamper proof chamber.

Lithium batteries last the life of the smoke alarm and don't need replacing annually. Young children should be taught to recognise the sound of an activating smoke alarm and what action to take. Older children may be able to assist the adults in their household to maintain their smoke alarms eg testing them by pushing the test button.

For more information go to: [Smoke alarms \(frv.vic.gov.au\)](http://frv.vic.gov.au)

#### Essential Question

- Why is it important for my home to have working smoke alarms and how can I help my family to maintain our smoke alarms?

#### Key Understandings

- A working smoke alarm will warn you if there is smoke in your home
- There must be at least one smoke alarm on every level in every home
- The Victorian fire services' advice is to have an additional smoke alarm in every bedroom, hallway and living area.
- Smoke alarms should be tested monthly
- If a smoke alarm has a 9-volt battery it should be replaced every year

- Smoke alarms should be replaced every ten years
- The Victorian fire services' advice is to have smoke alarms with 10-year batteries

## Lesson Steps

### CLASS DISCUSSION

**Display** the **SMOKE ALARM POSTER (pdf)** in hardcopy or on a screen OR show an actual smoke alarm.

**Ask** students:

- *What is this? or What are these?*
- *Where would you find one of these?*
- *What does it do?*

Use students' responses as an introduction to the Smoke Alarm video. Explain that the firefighters in the video will be talking to them about smoke alarms. Encourage them to watch and listen carefully.

### SHOW VIDEO – [Smoke Alarms](#)



**SMOKE ALARM SAFETY POSTERS** - Small Group (2-4 students) activity.

Create a series of large posters with smoke alarm safety slogans for display in prominent places around the school. Posters should promote use, maintenance and general awareness of smoke alarm safety.

Brainstorm slogans with class before breaking into small groups to create posters eg

- *Only Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives*
- *Install A Smoke Alarm in Your Bedroom*
- *Test Your Smoke Alarm Today*
- *Smoke Alarms. They Are the Law!*
- *Replace Your Old Smoke Alarms Now!*

Each poster should include a slogan and illustrations or photos. Each group could share their posters with the class prior to them being displayed on walls around the school.

### **EXTENSION ACTIVITY**

#### **WORKSHEET – MY SMOKE ALARMS (pdf)**

Students use the worksheet to investigate and describe the use of smoke alarms in their home. They will need to count how many there are, where they are installed (ceiling) and the rooms they are in.

Families should retain this worksheet as a source of smoke alarm information.