

MAKE A RESOLUTION:

TEST YOUR SMOKE ALARMS EVERY MONTH

Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service is asking people to make a resolution in 2015 to test their smoke alarms every month.

Many people see spring as an opportunity for a fresh start, and safety should be top of the list. So Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service is encouraging people to make sure they have enough smoke alarms in their home and that they work.

A smoke alarm can give someone the few extra seconds they need to escape in a fire. While the majority of homes across the country now have an alarm fitted, most people are not aware that the average alarm has a lifespan of just ten years and then needs replacing.

For people who live in a multi-storey home or a larger property, a single smoke alarm is simply not enough. Last year, in nearly half of all fires in the home where the smoke alarm did not give a warning the reason was that the alarm was not close enough to detect the fire. Missing or flat batteries were another major cause.

Laura Jones, prevention manager for Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service, said: "At this time of year, many people will be thinking of what they can do – big or small – to make a fresh start and improve their lives, homes and wellbeing. A smoke alarm can offer vital protection for you and your loved ones, but most people simply fit and forget – they don't know if it might be coming to the end of its lifespan or not working at all.

"For most of us, there is nothing more important than keeping our loved ones safe and secure. So if your alarm is getting past its best or you are missing alarms on different floors in your house, make your New Year's resolution to fit new ones, test them on the first of every month and protect your loved ones in 2015."

To keep your alarms in working order:

- Make sure there is at least one smoke alarm on every level of your home
- Test your smoke alarms by pushing the button every month
- Check that your smoke alarms are less than 10 years old
- Fit smoke alarms on landings and hallways and near bedrooms. Also consider fitting an additional smoke alarm in rooms which have an electrical appliance, e.g. a heater, or other risk
- Take a moment to check on your loved ones who may need help to test their smoke alarms to ensure they're fully protected.