

# Smoke Alarms



## for People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Smoke alarms save lives. However, people who are deaf or hard of hearing may not be able to depend on the traditional smoke alarm to alert them to a fire.

### SAFETY TIPS

- »» Smoke alarms and alert devices, called accessories, are available for people who are deaf. Strobe lights throughout the home are activated by smoke alarms and alert people who are deaf to fire conditions. When people who are deaf are asleep, a high intensity strobe light is required along with a pillow or bed shaker to wake them up and alert them to fire conditions so they can escape. Currently this equipment is activated by the sound of a standard smoke alarm.
- »» Smoke alarm alert devices, called accessories, are available for people who are hard of hearing. These accessories produce a loud, mixed low-pitched sound. This equipment is activated by the sound of the smoke alarm and is usually installed next to the bed. People who are deaf may find that a pillow or bed shaker is also helpful to wake them up.
- »» Recent research has shown that a loud, mixed low-pitched sound is more effective for waking people of all ages than the loud high-pitched sound of a traditional smoke alarm. As people age, their ability to hear high-pitched sounds decreases.
- »» Research the available products and select one that best meets your individual needs.

### WHERE TO FIND EQUIPMENT

Smoke alarms with built in or separate strobe lights can be purchased through home improvement store websites or by searching the internet for "strobe light smoke alarms." BRK/First Alert, Gentex and Kidde brands offer this type of smoke alarm. Smoke alarm accessories such as bed/pillow shakers, transmitters and receivers are available through [lifetone.com](http://lifetone.com), [safeawake.com](http://safeawake.com) and [silentcall.com](http://silentcall.com) Make sure any smoke alarm or accessory device you use has the label of a recognized testing laboratory.

### FACTS

- ! People with a hearing disability may not even hear a smoke alarm.
- ! Home fire sprinklers increase the chances of surviving a fire.

**AND DON'T FORGET...**  
All smoke alarms should be tested at least once a month using the test button.



[www.nfpa.org/disabilities](http://www.nfpa.org/disabilities)  
[www.nfpa.org/education](http://www.nfpa.org/education)

