

For Release July 21, 2010

Homeowner Deadline for New Smoke Alarm Ordinance is August 15

The second half of the City of Madison's new smoke alarm will take effect Sunday, August 15. The new ordinance passed by the City Council in March, 2009 requires smoke alarms with 10-year lithium batteries designed to last the life of the smoke alarm.

Under the newly adopted ordinance, all smoke alarms must have a 10-year battery in a tamper-resistant alarm unit, OR a hard-wired system with battery back-up.

9-volt batteries will no longer be used UNLESS they are being used as a battery back-up to a hard-wired alarm.

The ordinance requires additional alarms in the residence:

- o In each bedroom or sleeping area
- o Within six feet of each door leading to a bedroom or sleeping area of each unit
- o On each floor of the building

The City of Madison Fire Department has been awarded a Fire Prevention and Safety grant to purchase and install more than 3,000 smoke alarms for homeowners who are at the greatest risk of injury or death in a fire. The United States Fire Administration considers young children, older adults, people with disabilities, and people living in poverty at highest risk.

The grant program, administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, enhances fire departments' ability to protect the public and fire service personnel from fire and related hazards.

The City of Madison Fire Department received \$35,268 to help at-risk residents receive early warning in the event of a fire in their home. Smoke alarms provide early warning of fires, allow people more time to safely escape, and reduce fire deaths and injuries. Early detection of fires often results in smaller fires which cause less property damage and present less danger to the firefighters who must respond to the fires.

The Madison Fire Department is working with community organizations to identify the homes needing smoke alarms. Members of Madison Fire Fighters Local 311 are helping to install the alarms in residents' homes. Besides the alarms, residents will also receive fire safety information and materials.

Smoke alarm manufacturers First Alert and Kidde donated 348 smoke alarms to assist in this effort.

For more information, please contact the Madison Fire Department Community Education Office at 266-4709.