

## DAYLIGHT SAVINGS CHECKLIST

It's that time of year again...either to "Spring Ahead" (Daylight Savings to Standard Time) or "Fall Back" (Standard Time to Daylight Savings). This is the perfect time to create a home safety checklist and perform some safety "housekeeping".

**Smoke detectors** – every home should have at least one working smoke detector for each level or story, but it is preferable to have multiple detectors located in various areas of your home. Replace the batteries in each detector and test by holding down the test button. Clean the vents to ensure the sensor is not clogged or obstructed. Replace any detectors that are not working or more than ten years old. A helpful hint: use a marker to write the date of purchase on the back of the detector – then you won't have to guess how old it is. You can also add the date you replaced the batteries, though this isn't necessary if you use daylight saving time every six months as a reminder to replace them.

**Carbon monoxide detectors** – in addition to smoke detectors, your home needs at least one CO detector. Smoke alarms do not detect carbon monoxide unless you have one that has been specifically designed for both functions. If your detector is battery-operated, or has a back-up battery, replace with fresh batteries. Clean any vents and test the alarm. This is also a good time to check on any gas-operated home appliances, such as heaters and water heater tanks, to make sure they are operating properly and safely.

**Fire extinguishers** – every home should have at least one fire extinguisher per level or story. If your extinguisher has a gauge, make sure the arrow is in the green area – if not, it may be time to replace it. Once a month, turn the extinguisher upside down and hold for a minute or two then turn upright again – this will keep the contents of the extinguisher mixed and ready to use. Make sure family members know how and under what circumstances to operate the extinguisher.

**Fire drill and emergency drills** – this is a great time to practice family fire and emergency drills. Make sure everyone can hear the alarm and has a plan for escaping a fire or high levels of carbon monoxide. Educate your family on what to do and where to go in case of either type of alarm. Emergency drills are not just for schools and the worksite.

**Emergency supply kit** – if you've never had an emergency supply kit, now is a great time to make one. Most basic kits need: first aid supplies; bottled water; non-perishable food; emergency numbers; flashlights; a battery-operated radio; and batteries. Other items can be added according to what is recommended for your area. If you already have a kit, take this opportunity to restock or replace items as needed and add additional items.

**First aid kit** – as with the emergency kit, if you haven't created or bought a first aid kit for your home and your car, now is the time. If you already have kits, restock or replace any items that are expired or missing.

**Medicine cabinets** – medications that are expired can not only be ineffective, some can actually be dangerous. Clean out your medicine cabinet and dispose of expired medications properly. If you are unsure of the safest way to dispose of old medications, check with your local pharmacist. Make a list of everything you need to restock or replace.

These safety check-ups should be performed at least every six months, so keep this handy list as a reference and use daylight saving time as the perfect reminder to keep your home and family safe.