



John C. Littell
Fire Chief
Director of Public Safety
Emergency Management Director
860-871-3677

* * For Immediate Release * *

Did You Change The Batteries in Your Smoke and CO Alarms This Past Weekend?

(March 12, 2012) Tolland, CT - The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection's Commission on Fire Prevention and Control is urging Connecticut residents to **replace the batteries in their smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms** in conjunction with the beginning of Daylight Saving Time. This year, Daylight Saving Time began on Sunday, March 11. **Fresh batteries** allow smoke and CO alarms to do their jobs **saving lives** by alerting families of a fire or a buildup of deadly carbon monoxide in their homes.

Annually, there is an average of **386,300 residential fires in the United States** resulting in nearly **2,400 deaths** between 2006 and 2008.

Two-thirds of fire deaths occur in homes where there are no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms. That is why it is important to **replace batteries at least once every year** and to **test your alarms every month** to make sure they work. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) recommends consumers have **smoke alarms on every level of their home, outside bedrooms and inside each bedroom.**

In addition, the CPSC estimates there is an **annual average of 183 unintentional non-fire CO poisoning deaths** associated with consumer products between 2006 and 2008. CO is called the "invisible killer," because it is a colorless, odorless and poisonous gas. Because of this, people may not know they are being poisoned. Carbon monoxide is produced by the incomplete burning of fuel in various products, including furnaces, portable generators, fireplaces, cars and charcoal grills.

That is why it is important to have working **CO alarms in the home, on each level and outside each sleeping area.** Families should also have in place and exercise a home escape plan.

###