



Community Outreach Plan

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OVERVIEW

This **Community Outreach Plan** is part of our Smoke Alarm Resource Toolbox, a collection of resources you can use to educate your community about the importance of smoke alarms during. The plan is designed as a blueprint for Public Information Officers (PIOs) and other fire and life safety professionals aiming to educate the public on the importance of having working smoke alarms.



Engage your audience
via social media, news media and
local events.



Raise awareness
and provide actionable information
so people understand the importance
of having working smoke alarms,
proper placement, and regular
testing.



This outreach plan includes:

Key Talking Points	Media Pitch	Social Media Caption Copy and Social Videos/Images
<p>Reference the talking points for messaging related to fire safety and smoke alarm best practices.</p> <p>These are the priority messages you want your audience to understand and remember.</p> <p>These talking points can be used to prep spokespeople ahead of media interviews, social Q&As and community events.</p>	<p>This document includes a template media pitch for you to adapt to fit local needs and circumstances. A pitch is an email you send to media sharing a story idea and offering your spokespeople as a resource for an interview. The pitch includes an invitation to cover Fire Prevention Week, tips on smoke alarms, and an offer to interview your spokespeople.</p>	<p>We've developed social captions and videos for you to use on your social pages. Download the captions and edit the copy to fit your voice and style. Pair with the provided videos and publish across your social channels throughout your campaign.</p> <p>Consider adding ways to engage your audience that are a fit for your social pages, including, for example, a Question box on Instagram Stories to answer questions from your community or a live Q&A with one of your spokespeople.</p> <p>There are many hashtags associated with fire safety and Fire Prevention Week that you can use. A few of those include:</p> <p>#FireSafety #FirePrevention #SmokeAlarmsSaveLives #FirePreventionWeek.</p> <p>Based on when you post, we recommend #FirePreventionMonth or #FirePreventionWeek and #SmokeAlarmsSaveLives at minimum to help increase visibility on social media.</p> <p>In addition to the posts we've prepared, we recommend highlighting any news coverage featuring your spokespeople, your presence at community events discussing smoke alarms, and fire safety.</p>

Sample Campaign + Timeline

Below we've outlined a sample campaign timeline for Fire Prevention Week. This is just an example and can be adjusted to work for you and your communications priorities.

Preparation Phase

- Materials Preparation
 - Customize the messages you want to convey to your community and any media pitches you may want to share with local newspapers and tv stations. As you develop these materials, keep in mind that mention of the safety theme you want to highlight (in this case, Fire Prevention week), should be in the first sentence in order to focus your audience's attention.
 - Get any approvals you need within your organization.
- Media Outreach
 - Identify local reporters who cover community safety, have reported on fire incidents, or any you have relationships with.
 - Confirm the spokesperson who will talk to reporters and conduct TV interviews if requested. Recommend letting them know they will need to be available all week, and often on short notice, for interview requests.

Execution Phase

Monday - Campaign Launch

- Social Media Post: Kick off with a post introducing Fire Prevention Week and sharing one of the videos from the Smoke Alarm Friendship series to give your audience an overview of what it means to prepare for and stay safe during a fire incident.
- Send customized pitches highlighting the relevance of Fire Prevention Week and offering interviews with your spokesperson.

Tuesday

- Social Media Post: Share a post on the importance of having smoke alarms, noting that newer technology can better distinguish between smoke from cooking and smoke from a fire – limiting those nuisance alarms, which is the number one reason people disable their smoke alarms.
- Send a follow-up email to your local newspaper or TV station about the week's activities and key messages regarding the importance of smoke alarms. Provide additional information, answer questions and confirm interview schedules.

Wednesday

- Participate in media interviews and share any news stories featuring your spokespeople as social posts.

Thursday

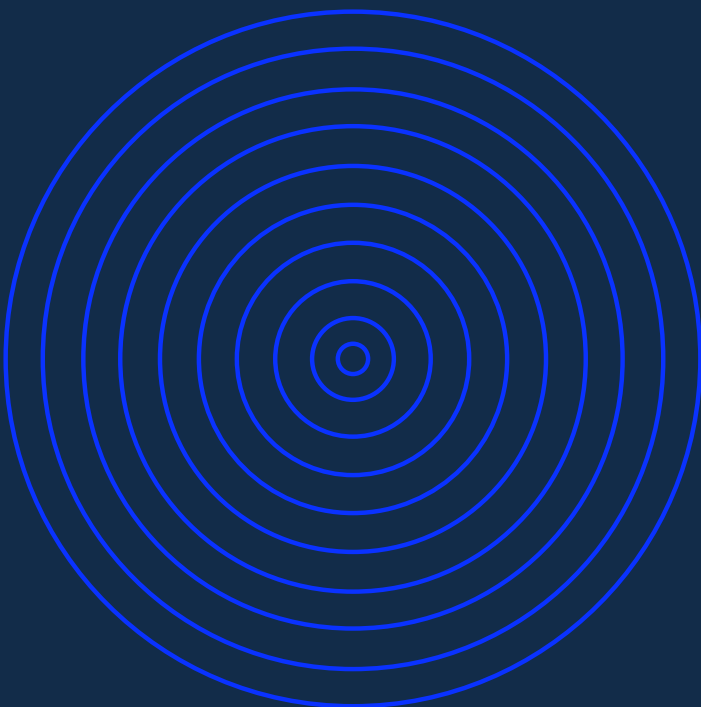
- Publish a social post on the importance of having an escape plan in place in the event of a fire and share the [escape plan](#).

Friday

- Publish a social media post sharing your group's participation in Fire Prevention Week and ways your audience can keep fire safety top of mind year round.
- Follow-Up: Send thank-you notes to media and community partners who participated in your in-person or online events (e.g., "Thank you so much for helping bring this important message to our community! We appreciate your support in educating people about the importance of smoke alarms.") and share photos from any community events as social posts.

Key Talking Points

- Research from FSRI demonstrates that fires in modern homes with **synthetic furnishings** can have an escape time of less than three minutes from the time the fire starts. A fire from a large device with an unregulated lithium-ion battery, like an e-bike or e-scooter, can reduce that escape time to less than one minute.
- Smoke alarms give you and your loved ones the earliest warning possible that there is a fire, so you can get out of your home quickly and safely.
- Three out of five home fire deaths occur when there are no working smoke alarms.
- The best type of alarm is a working smoke alarm. Smoke alarms can differ in the sensors and technology used to detect smoke, and some produce different sounds to indicate when smoke has been detected, such as making a voice announcement.
- Installation
 - Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of the home including the basement.
 - Smoke alarms should be installed at least 10 feet away from cooking appliances. Proper installation can prevent nuisance alarms.
 - Smoke alarms should be installed high on walls or ceilings. Wall-mounted smoke alarms should be installed one foot away from the ceiling, and they shouldn't be placed near windows, doors, or ducts where drafts might interfere with their operation.
 - Smoke alarms should be replaced according to the manufacturer's recommendations, which is usually every 10 years, or when they stop working – whichever comes first. If your smoke alarm is more than 10 years old, install new alarms and look for products that are third-party listed or certified.
 - Install smoke alarms yourself or ask a friend or family member for help.
- The number one reason people disable smoke alarms is because smoke from cooking sets them off. Newer technology can better distinguish smoke from cooking and smoke from a life-threatening fire.
- To test your smoke alarm, find the smoke alarm's test button and press it. If working properly, you'll hear a very loud beep. If the sound is weak or there isn't a sound, it's time to replace your batteries, or the whole device.



Sharable Videos to Promote Smoke Alarm Safety:

Smoke Alarm Friendship Stories

- [Work From Home Buddies](#)
- [Art Installation](#)
- [He said, She Said](#)
- [Candle Catastrophe](#)
- [Sweet Dreams](#)
- [What's Cooking](#)
- [Babyproof](#)
- [\(Don't\) Feel the Burn](#)
- [Contemporary Hazards in the House Fire Safety Tips and Solutions From the Experts](#)
- [What's So Dangerous About Smoke?](#)

Media Pitch

SUBJ: Reminder for Fire Prevention Week – Smoke Alarms Save Lives

Hi XX,

This Fire Prevention Week (October 6-12, 2024) [INSERT YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME] wants to remind your readers/viewers that smoke alarms save lives. According to the [Fire Safety Research Institute](#) (FSRI), fire spreads faster than ever through homes today, meaning you have less time to escape in the event of a fire. [NFPA reported](#) that smoke alarms were not present in 26% of reported home fires from 2018-2022. With only three minutes or less to escape, smoke alarms give you and your loved ones the earliest warning possible that there is a fire, so you can get out of your home quickly and safely.

Please share this life-saving information with your audience this Fire Prevention Week and remind them smoke alarms should be:

- Installed in every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of the home including the basement.
- Installed at least 10 feet away from cooking appliances. Proper installation can prevent nuisance alarms. The number one reason people disable smoke alarms is because smoke from cooking sets them off. Newer technology can better distinguish smoke from cooking and smoke from a life-threatening fire. But remember, the best kind of smoke alarm is a working smoke alarm! Look for newer technology whenever you're replacing a smoke alarm.
- Installed high on walls or ceilings. Wall-mounted smoke alarms should be installed one foot away from the ceiling, and they shouldn't be placed near windows, doors, or ducts where drafts might interfere with their operation.
- Replaced according to the manufacturer's recommendations, which is usually every 10 years, or when they stop working – whichever comes first. If your smoke alarm is more than 10 years old, install new alarms and look for products that are third-party listed or certified.
- Tested at least twice per year. Find the smoke alarm's test button and press it. If working properly, you'll hear a very loud beep. If the sound is weak or there isn't a sound, it's time to replace your batteries, or the whole device if it's a sealed-battery alarm.

If you are interested in learning more about smoke alarms and other fire safety tips to share with your audience, I'm happy to arrange a time for you to speak with [INSERT NAME AND TITLE OF YOUR SPOKESPERSON/SUBJECT-MATTER EXPERT]. Please also visit smokealarms.ul.org for more information.

Best,

X

Sample Messages for Social Media

Option 1

It's #FirePreventionWeek! This week, we'll be sharing tips to keep you and your loved ones safe in the event of a fire. The first step is ensuring your smoke alarm is working properly! To test your smoke alarm, find the smoke alarm's test button and press it. If working properly, you'll hear a very loud beep. If the sound is weak or there isn't a sound, it's time to replace your batteries, or the whole device if it's a sealed-battery alarm.

#SmokeAlarms #SmokeAlarmsSaveLives #FireSafety

Option 2

Smoke alarms can now better distinguish between smoke from cooking and smoke from a real, potentially life-threatening fire thanks to new technology. @FSRI shows us how smoke alarms really feel when you try to disable them.

Smoke Alarm Friendship Stories: What's Cooking

#FirePreventionWeek #SmokeAlarms
#SmokeAlarmsSaveLives #FireSafety

Option 3

Smoke is the leading cause of death in home fires, and it spreads quickly! You may only have three minutes or less to escape from the time a fire starts. The longer a fire burns, the more toxic the smoke becomes and the more likely you won't be able to see your way out or use your normal exit route. Having working smoke alarms provides the earliest warning possible, giving you precious time to execute your fire escape plan. Don't have an escape plan?

Download this guide to help get a plan in place.

Escape Plan

#FirePreventionWeek #SmokeAlarms

Option 4

As #FirePreventionWeek comes to a close, we want to remind you to practice fire safety throughout the year! This is your reminder to test your smoke alarm and create your escape plan. Remember: the best smoke alarm is a working smoke alarm!

Smoke Alarm Friendship Stories: Candle Catastrophe

#SmokeAlarms #SmokeAlarmsSaveLives #FireSafety

