



FSRI Releases New Smoke Alarm PSAs Along with Insights from Annual Fire Safety Survey for Fire Prevention Month

Survey shows that people underestimate the danger of a house fire and aren't taking steps to protect themselves

Oct. 4, 2021 (Columbia, Maryland) – For Fire Prevention Month in October, [UL's Fire Safety Research Institute \(FSRI\)](#) has unveiled two new smoke alarm public safety announcements (PSAs) in its Smoke Alarm Friendship Series, inviting people to reimagine their relationships with their smoke alarms. The new PSAs are aimed at driving awareness of the importance of having working smoke alarms properly installed in homes. Their release, just in time for Fire Prevention Week, coincides with the release of results from FSRI's annual consumer fire safety survey that points to both behavior and awareness gaps when it comes to fire safety, with nearly one in four (22%) respondents believing the risk of death or injury is low in the event of a house fire.

The new PSAs continue the Smoke Alarm Friendship series with two scenes encouraging viewers to install working smoke alarms in their homes, because while home fires are decreasing, home fire deaths are on the rise. People should make sure they have working smoke alarms on every floor of their home, including the basement, as well as inside and outside of every sleeping area.

Another important fire safety action people should take to protect themselves and their loved ones in the event of a fire is having and practicing an escape plan that includes having two ways to get out of every room and identifying a common meeting place outside of the home.

In addition, according to FSRI's research, everyone should [Close Before You Doze](#)[®]. A closed door can be an effective barrier against deadly levels of carbon monoxide, smoke and flames, and may give people more time to respond to the smoke alarm. In fact, there can be a 900-degree difference in room temperature between a room with an open door and one with a closed door, with the open-door room reaching temperatures of 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit or more.

While most people who have smoke alarms report having working smoke alarms (92%), only 34% definitely know the meaning of the various sounds their smoke alarms make, according to the results of the annual fire safety survey conducted in September 2021. In addition, 68% of respondents are unaware of the timeline for smoke alarm replacement and nearly half of respondents (43%) would investigate the area if a smoke alarm sounded rather than evacuate.

Other highlights from the fire safety survey include:

- Only 33% of respondents always sleep with their door closed. Among those that sleep with their door open, 13% believe it is safer to do so and 26% of respondents believe it doesn't matter whether their door is open or closed in the event of a fire.
- More than a quarter (27%) of people estimated they would have more than three minutes to safely exit their home in the event of a home fire. However, although the majority of people understand that they need to quickly exit their home, 46% of people believe they would have enough time to gather what's important to them and safely exit their home.
- 35% of respondents indicated they have no fire escape plan. Among those with a fire escape plan in place, 41% have only reviewed or practiced once or not at all.

"Fire hasn't changed in the past quarter century, but our home environments have, and because of this fire moves faster than ever before with home fire deaths rising even as home fires decline," said Steve Kerber, vice president of research and director of FSRI. "Our annual fire safety survey shows that fire



safety habits still aren't where they need to be to prevent loss of life and property. Everyone can take three simple steps by having working smoke alarms, having an escape plan and closing their bedroom door at night.”

The new PSAs can be seen at smokealarms.ul.org and more information on the research behind these and fire safety tips can be found at CloseYourDoor.org.

Survey Methodology

Allison+Partners Research + Insights surveyed 3,185 individuals over the age of 18 in the United States. The survey was fielded using Qualtrics, and panel was sourced from Lucid. Fielding was executed in September 2021.

About Fire Safety Research Institute

UL's Fire Safety Research Institute (FSRI) strives to advance fire safety knowledge and strategies in order to create safer environments. Using advanced fire science, rigorous research, extensive outreach and education in collaboration with an international network of partners, the organization imparts stakeholders with knowledge, tools, and resources that enable them to make better, more fire safe decisions that ultimately save lives and property. To learn more, visit fsri.org. Follow Fire Safety Research Institute on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

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