

What you should know about smoke alarm safety in your home

JOURNAL STAFF

Tens of millions of U.S. homes are estimated to have smoke alarms but not enough to meet safety standards and protect their homes in the event of a fire. Smoke alarms should be placed on every level of your home and especially outside sleeping areas and inside each bedroom.

The most common types of smoke alarms are ionization smoke detection

(heat sensor) and photoelectric smoke detection (smoke and light sensor). Many people have called Lake Stevens Fire concerned that they might have the wrong type of smoke alarm in their home. It is important to know that any smoke alarm technology approved by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) or Underwriter Laboratories (UL) must perform acceptably for both types of fires in order to provide early warning of fire.

The best evidence, as stated by NFPA, has always indicated that either type of smoke alarm will provide enough time for escape for most people, in most fires. If at any time research points to a different conclusion, changes will be made of NFPA standard and UL testing.

If you are still uneasy about only having one type of smoke alarm in your home, whether it be ionization or photoelectric, you can place both types of alarms side-by-

side or replace your current smoke alarms with combination alarms that include both technologies in a single device.

Lake Stevens Fire reminds you to test your alarms every month and change the batteries twice a year when you change your clocks; faulty or dead smoke alarms are useless smoke alarms. For more information regarding smoke alarms, visit www.nfpa.org/smokealarms.