

Mastering the 10-Minute Mini-Lesson



Educational Messages to Review

1.6: Smoke Alarm Replacement

- 1.6.1 Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.
- 1.6.2 Replace any smoke alarm that does not respond after a new battery has been installed.

Topic: Replace Smoke Alarms Every 10 Years

Audience: Adults

Lesson Objective: By the end of the mini-lesson, attendees will:

- be able to locate the date of manufacture on a smoke alarm
- appreciate the importance of replacing smoke alarms when they reach the 10-year mark

Preparation for the Mini-lesson: Make a list of items that have expiration dates, such as milk, driver's license, medication, batteries, child car seats, sunscreen, baking powder, and so forth. Gather a few samples of these items, along with some older and newer smoke alarms to use as props during your lesson.

Step 1: Introduction (3 Minutes)

- Greet the attendees and thank them for allowing you to speak for 10 minutes. Let them know you are happy to be there.
- Introduce yourself and share your connection to the community.
- HOOK:
 - Ask the attendees to think of familiar items that have an expiration date.
 - Make a list of the attendees' suggestions. As they share an item that you have on hand, validate their response by holding up the item and showing the expiration date.
 - Ask volunteers to explain why it is important to comply with the expiration dates on these items. Participants will likely mention points around preventing illness and injury.
- Explain the purpose of your visit: "Many people are not aware that smoke alarms also have an expiration date. They expire 10 years from when they are made."

Step 2: Body (5–6 minutes)

- Inform attendees that all smoke alarms need to be replaced when they are 10 years old. This will ensure people have working smoke alarms to alert everyone if there is a fire in the home.
- Pass out the sample smoke alarms you brought along. Ask volunteers to find the date shown on the back of each alarm. Let them know this date shows when the smoke alarm was made.
- Ask volunteers holding out-of-date alarms to raise their hands and tell everyone the manufacture date on the alarm. Confirm that the date indicates an alarm that is at least 10 years old.
- Ask the people with the remaining alarms to hold up their alarms and point to the dates. Confirm that these alarms are likely to continue working for years to come.
- Remind attendees it is possible for items to stop working sooner than expected. If a smoke alarm is not working properly after a new battery is installed, the entire alarm should be replaced — even if it is less than 10 years old.

Step 3: Conclusion (1–2 minutes)

- Encourage attendees to check the dates on their smoke alarms when they return home. Inform them that this is also a good time to test the alarms.
- Remind attendees that smoke alarms more than 10 years old must be replaced.
- Inform attendees about community resources that can help with testing, maintaining, and installing smoke alarms.
- Share your contact information and encourage attendees to contact you if they have questions or concerns about other safety issues.
- Thank everyone for their time and for inviting you to speak.



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