

# Red Cross, Charter Communications to install free smoke alarms in Alton neighborhoods

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**ST. LOUIS, MO**— Volunteers from the American Red Cross and Charter Communications will canvass homes in Alton, IL, to install **FREE** smoke alarms from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, October 1.

The number to call to set an installation appointment is 314-516-2797. Please leave your name and a call back number. If the phone keeps ringing, it means the voicemail is full and we are working on pulling messages as possible. Please keep trying to call.

In targeted, fire-prone neighborhoods, volunteers will install smoke alarms, replace batteries and help families make a fire escape plan. Having one working smoke alarm cuts the risk of dying in a home fire by **half**.

At each home, volunteers will ask families to

- Create an escape plan with two exit routes from every room

- Practice that plan at least twice a year

Charter volunteers will meet at 9 a.m. at the Alton Fire Department, for a brief canvassing orientation. All volunteers will receive Red Cross training prior to the event.

“While this is a labor-intensive project, we know it saves lives,” said Cindy Erickson, Red Cross CEO. “I am proud to be part of it.” Erickson added that this installation is part of a 5-year effort to reduce home fire deaths and injuries by 25 percent. She noted

- Seven times a day, someone in this country dies in a home fire.
- Every 33 minutes, an injury from a fire is reported.
- Nearly 3,300 times every day, fire departments are called to home fires.
- Families have only two minutes to escape a burning home before it’s too late.
- Three times a day, the Greater St. Louis Red Cross responds to a home fire.

**“It’s important for everyone to make sure their household is ready,”**said Erickson. “A disaster like a home fire can happen any time. We urge people to take these steps now and know what they should do if an emergency occurs.”

Erickson reminds everyone to

- **Check smoke alarm batteries. When changing your clocks, take a few minutes to replace the smoke alarm batteries and push the test button to make sure the alarms are working. It’s also a great time to check carbon monoxide detectors.**
- **Install smoke alarms.** If someone doesn’t have smoke alarms, install them. At a minimum, put one on every level of the home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas. Check local building codes for additional requirements.
- **[Get a kit.](#) Keep disaster supplies in an easy-to-carry bag to use at home or carry in case ordered to evacuate.**
- Practice an escape plan. Make sure everyone in the family knows how to get out of every room and how to get out of the home in less than two minutes.
- **[Make a plan.](#) Have all household members plan what steps they should take if an emergency occurs.**
- **[Be informed.](#) Learn what emergencies can occur in the area and how officials notify residents should a disaster occur.**

The Red Cross is part of the “All Ready” campaign, a unified effort among emergency preparedness experts in the bi-state region that focuses on the importance of individual preparedness. The campaign encourages the three critical steps of preparedness: Make a plan, Get a kit, Be informed.

“Charter is proud to partner with the American Red Cross on such an important event,” said Wes Shirley, Senior Manager of Communications. “Charter our Community is our national philanthropic initiative aimed at providing education, resources and financial support to improve 25,000 homes by the year 2020. This partnership allows us to help make homes healthier and safer.”

The American Red Cross of Eastern Missouri is a proud member agency of the United Way, which makes significant investments every year in Red Cross services.

### **About the American Red Cross of Eastern Missouri:**

*Celebrating 99 years of dedicated service in the region, the American Red Cross prevents and alleviates human suffering in the face of emergencies. Thousands of volunteers and generous donors provide community support services including disaster relief, preparedness efforts, training in lifesaving skills, service to military families and blood services. The Eastern Missouri Red Cross covers St. Louis City, and 62 surrounding counties in Missouri and Illinois. All disaster relief services are free. To learn more about the Red Cross and how you can help, contact your local Red Cross by calling 1-800-RED-CROSS (733-2767) or visit [redcross.org](http://redcross.org).*