

# Red Cross: Turn Your Clocks Back, Test Your Smoke Alarms

by Sharon Watson

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ST. LOUIS - As daylight saving time ends on November 6, the American Red Cross encourages everyone to test their smoke alarms as they turn their clocks back to help stay safe from home fires.

“Home fires claim more lives in a typical year than all natural disasters combined, but working smoke alarms can cut the risk of dying in a home fire by half,” said Chris

Harmon, Regional Disaster Officer for the Missouri Arkansas Region. “The sooner an alarm alerts you to a fire, the sooner you can get out. When you turn your clocks back this weekend, also test your smoke alarms to help prevent a tragedy in your home.”

Since July 1, 2022, Red Cross volunteers in Missouri have responded to helped over 2,200 people in Missouri affected by more than 570 home fires, which account for most of the more than 60,000 disasters that the Red Cross responds to annually across the country.

In the Greater St. Louis chapter, approximately 620 people have been helped by Red Cross following approximately 160 fires, just since July 1.

**HOW TO TURN AND TEST** When turning your clocks back this weekend, test your smoke alarms and replace the batteries if needed. Visit [redcross.org/fire](https://www.redcross.org/fire) for more information, including an escape plan to create and practice with your family, or download the free Red Cross Emergency app by searching “American Red Cross” in app stores.

- **Install smoke alarms on every level of your home**, including inside and outside bedrooms and sleeping areas.
- **Replace smoke alarms that are 10 years or older.** Components such as sensors can become less sensitive over time. Follow your alarm’s manufacturer instructions.
- **Practice your two-minute home fire escape plan.** Make sure everyone in your household can get out in less than two minutes — the amount of time you may have to escape a burning home before it’s too late.
- **Include at least two ways to get out** of every room and select a meeting spot at a safe distance away from your home, such as your neighbor’s home or landmark like a specific tree in your front yard, where everyone can meet.

**IF YOU NEED HELP** If you cannot afford to purchase smoke alarms or are physically unable to install one, the Red Cross may be able to help. Contact your [local Red Cross](#) for help or visit [www.redcross.org/SmokeAlarmMO](https://www.redcross.org/SmokeAlarmMO)

**HOME FIRE CAMPAIGN SAVES LIVES** Since October 2014, the Red Cross Home Fire Campaign with community partners has saved at least 1,414 by educating families about fire safety, helping them create escape plans and installing more than 2.4 million free smoke alarms in high-risk neighborhoods across the country. Visit [redcross.org/homefires](https://www.redcross.org/homefires) for more information.

**About the American Red Cross:**

*The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides comfort to victims of disasters; supplies about 40% of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; distributes international humanitarian aid; and supports veterans, military members and their families. The Red Cross is a nonprofit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to deliver its mission. For more information, please visit [redcross.org](http://redcross.org) or [CruzRojaAmericana.org](http://CruzRojaAmericana.org), or visit us on Twitter at [@RedCross](https://twitter.com/RedCross).*