



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Change your clocks, change your smoke alarm batteries

30 March 2011

Fire and Rescue NSW Commissioner Greg Mullins and Rural Fire Service Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons today urged householders to change their smoke alarm batteries when they changed their clocks at the end of Daylight Saving on April 3.

Commissioner Mullins said taking a few minutes to ensure smoke alarms were working properly could buy valuable time for families during an emergency.

"Every year, smoke alarms alert hundreds of NSW families to fires in their homes, allowing them a safe escape," Commissioner Mullins said.

"Smoke alarms can save lives but only if they are in proper working order. A smoke alarm with a flat battery is just as bad as no smoke alarm at all."

In 2010, Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW) and the Rural Fire Service (RFS) attended almost 5000 home fires which tragically killed 30 people and injured hundreds of others.

"It is vital that you protect yourself and your family by making sure you have working smoke alarms," Commissioner Mullins said. "It only takes a few minutes for fire to engulf a home, destroying property, possessions and lives."

"It's crucial you test your smoke alarm monthly and change the batteries at least once a year. In the event of a fire, call Triple Zero (000) from a safe place and wait for firefighters to arrive."

RFS Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons said emergency services often had to travel considerable distances, particularly in remote areas, to respond to house fires.

"So it is absolutely essential that people in rural areas have working smoke alarms, along with a practised evacuation plan," he said. "Smoke alarms can provide a vital early warning that may prove critical in the event of a fire."

FRNSW crews will visit Bunnings stores across NSW on April 2 and 3 as part of the campaign which is supported by Duracell.

FRNSW recommends that photo-electric smoke alarms are installed in all bedrooms and hallways.

It's also essential for people to install smoke alarms in caravans, campervans and other moveable dwellings where people sleep under new laws introduced on 25 February 2011.

For information on smoke alarms visit [www.fire.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au)

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