

# Dust and dirt can clog them Keep your smoke alarms clean to keep them working properly

The next time you're vacuuming your house, don't just pay attention to the dirt and dust on the floor. Look up to the smoke alarms on your ceiling.

When smoke alarms get plugged up with dirt and dust, they can become inoperable-even if the batteries are still good.

•Every month or so, clean out the alarm detection chamber and protective cover with the soft brush attachment of your vacuum.

•You may want to clean smoke alarms more often if there's a smoker in the house. Remember, fumes and other particles rise in the air and can get captured in your smoke alarm.

•You should also test your alarm monthly to make sure it's working. Use a candle, cigarette or incense to introduce smoke into the unit until the alarm sounds.

•If the alarm is battery-powered and doesn't sound, replace the battery and try again. If it's electrically connected to household circuits and doesn't sound, check the fuse and try again.

•In either case, if the alarm still isn't

working, replace the entire unit. A dead unit is worse than none at all, as it can give you a false sense of security.

•To ensure proper operation, replace the batteries at least once a year, or when you hear intermittent beeping. Don't use rechargeable batteries for smoke alarms; unlike non-rechargeable batteries, they will lose their charge without emitting any warning signal.

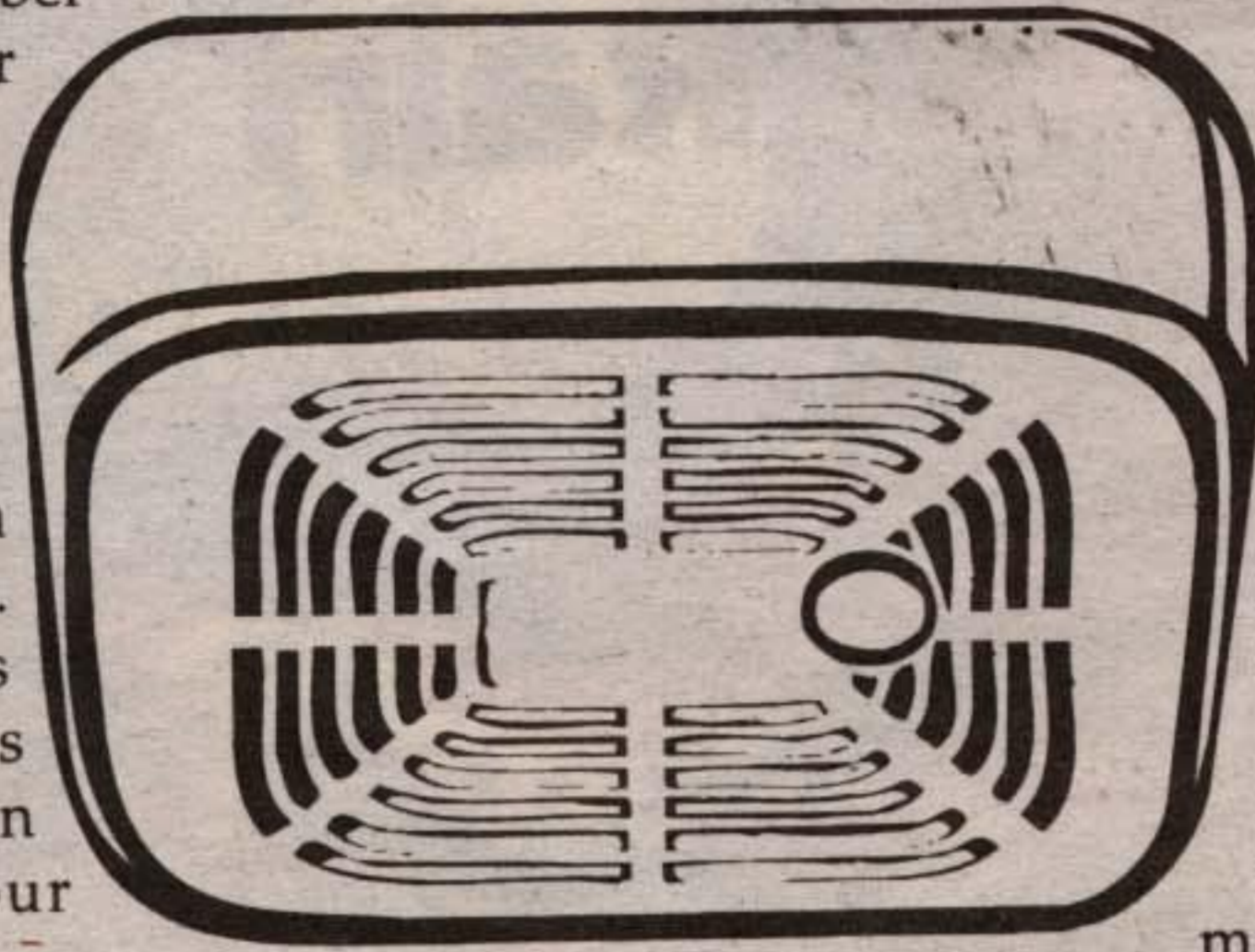
•Install your alarms on each level of the home (including basements), in hallways adjacent to stairs or bedrooms.

•Always read the manufacturer's instructions for specific testing, installation and maintenance information. And use only

smoke alarms tested and approved by the CSA or ULC.

•Remember that most fatal fires start at night, when you are asleep. You can be overcome by smoke and never even wake up. Seconds can make the difference between life and death. By detecting smoke in the early stages of a fire and sounding an alarm, a smoke alarm can give you those vital seconds.

—Insurance Bureau Of Canada



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# SAFETY CHECK LIST

## HEATING SYSTEM

- Have your furnace checked by a qualified heating specialist annually.
- Replace furnace filter at least once a month.
- Humidifier – clean any lime deposits and clean the drum.
- Install a programmable thermostat to control your home heating system.

## AIR SEALING

*Remember those drafts last winter?*

- Caulk around window frames, doors and baseboards to reduce drafts.
- Apply weatherstripping around your entry doors for a nice tight seal.
- Consider shrink wrap window film for patio doors and windows that won't be used during the winter months... You keep the view but loose the cold air.
- Check around your electrical plugs and switches. If you feel a draft, install inexpensive foam insulating gaskets.

## HOME SAFETY

- Install carbon monoxide sensors in your home to prevent exposure to this odourless, colourless gas.
- Test all your smoke detectors to be sure they are in good working order and replace the batteries if necessary.
- Plug up those air leaks and cracks. Keep the warm air inside and lower your heating bill at the same time by caulking, weatherstripping and insulating.
- Lower your thermostat by increasing the humidity- With higher humidity you'll feel warmer and require less home heating. So why not attach a humidifier to your furnace or purchase a portable one.
- Shed some new light on the shorter days ahead- As the days get shorter, you'll need to light your house longer. Consider energy efficient motion sensors, compact fluorescent, halogens and low voltage indoor and outdoor lighting.
- Keep your family safe from carbon monoxide

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