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NEW RULES ON SMOKE DETECTORS TAKE EFFECT

Des Moines, IOWA --- This Thursday, April 1, 2010 new rules governing the installation and replacement of smoke detectors in residential occupancies will take effect, making Iowa an even safer place to live.

The new rule mandates all new smoke detectors, and all existing smoke detectors which are being replaced, must be a Dual-sensor Smoke Detector. In order to meet the definition of dual sensor, the detector must:

1. Have both a photoelectric and ionization sensor installed, or
2. Two sensors installed, at least one of which detects smoke and one of which detects other hazards such as heat or carbon monoxide.

Combining multiple sensors in one device, enables the detector to sense multiple hazards, from multiple sources. This will in turn help occupants more quickly escape any fire when it occurs in their home.

Since 1975, thousands of lives have been saved throughout the country with the development and installation of smoke detectors. Since 1975 however, the technology related to fire detection has greatly improved and so too must our standards. That's why last year the State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) began an effort to update state regulations on smoke detectors in residential occupancies.

State Fire Marshal Ray Reynolds commented, "You likely don't use the same technology in your car or TV that you used in 1975, so why would you use it in your smoke detectors? This is a solid step forward in saving lives from fire in Iowa."

Although Iowa is one of the first states to implement an enhanced standard for residential smoke detectors, manufacturers have assured the SFMO sufficient stockpiles are available at retail outlets and electrical wholesalers. Previous delays in manufacturing caused the SFMO to delay implementation from the original date of October 13, 2009 to April 1, 2010.

To view a list of frequently asked questions go to www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/smokedetector.shtml

Please submit questions to: bcinfo@dps.state.ia.us or call (515)725-6145.