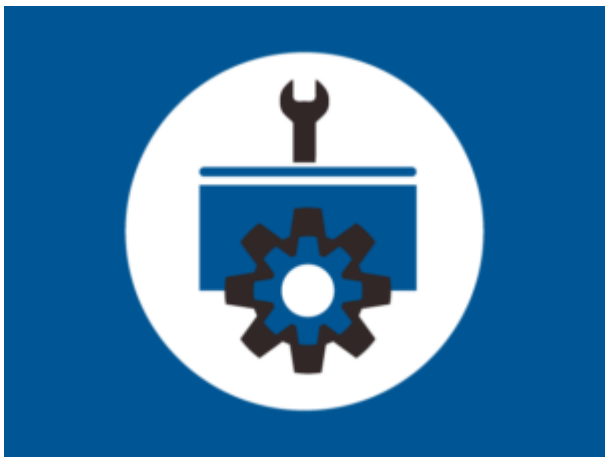
NFPA Smoke Alarms in US Home Fires Report



Statistics and background on the effectiveness of smoke alarms in homes.

Abstract

According to a telephone survey, 96-97% of US households have at least one smoke alarm, yet in 2007-2011, smoke alarms were present in only three quarters (73%) of all reported home fires and operated in half (52%) of all reported home fires. ("Homes" include one- and two-family homes, apartments, and manufactured housing.) More than one-third (37%) of all home fire deaths resulted from fires in homes with no smoke alarms, while almost one-quarter (23%) resulted from fires in homes in which smoke alarms were present but did not operate. When smoke alarms were present in fires considered large enough to activate them, they operated 86% of the time. The death rate per 100 reported fires was twice as high in homes without a working smoke alarm (1.18 deaths per 100 fires) as it was in home fires with this protection (0.53 deaths per 100 fires). When a smoke alarm was present, regardless of operation, the death rate was…