



Reasons why smoke alarms alarming for no reason

False alarms are most commonly caused by something interfering with the sensor. Proper maintenance of your smoke alarms will also reduce the likelihood of any false alarms.



Insects & Dust

Insects and dust are common cause of false alarms. Make sure the smoke alarm is regularly maintained. Regularly clean and vacuum to remove any loose dust and foreign particles within the smoke alarm. Insects may be inside or around the alarm. If so, fumigate the base plate area and thoroughly clean the alarm giving it a wipe and vacuum. Wipe the smoke alarm with insect repellent wipes, do not use insect spray.

Tip – Regularly clean & vacuum your smoke alarm to remove any dust that may be inside the unit. Fumigate the base plate area using insect repellent wipes to deter insects (do not spray directly at alarm)



High Humidity & Dew Point

False alarms can occur if water vapor molecules develop inside the sensor chamber due to direct environmental conditions. The moisture generated from high humidity and dew point can cause smoke alarms to react the same way as it does to smoke. Once humidity reaches 85% or dew point occurs, false alarms could frequently happen and weak batteries can also increase the chance of false alarms.

[More information on dew point can be found here.](#)

Tip – In high humidity, use a hair dryer to blow warm air through the smoke alarm to assist with drying out any moisture build up.



Cooking Fumes

Cooking fumes can cause the smoke alarm to activate especially when the smoke alarm is located too close to the kitchen. It is recommended to locate smoke alarms at least 5m away from the kitchen always utilise your range hood / extraction fan when cooking. Compared to Ionisation alarms, Photoelectric smoke alarms are less prone to initiating caused by cooking fumes, however it is widely recommended to install a smoke alarm well away from Kitchen areas.

Tip – Always utilise your range hood / extraction fan when cooking. Smoke alarms should be installed at least 5 meters away from the kitchen area. If your smoke alarm is activated by cooking fumes, simply press the Hush button to temporarily silence your alarms (for a period of 8 minutes) until the fumes have cleared.



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Steam

Steam from bathrooms and laundry can cause false alarm. Smoke alarms located inside or in front of bathrooms, showers and laundry can activate when steam enters the smoke alarm.

Tip – Always utilise your bathroom extraction fan while showering to help clear and reduce the amount of steam. Smoke alarms should not be installed within or directly outside bathrooms and laundries.



High Volume Air Movement

High air movement can cause the smoke alarm to false alarm as dust and other foreign particles are blown directly towards the smoke alarm, triggering the sensor chamber to react the same way as it does to smoke. If a smoke alarm is installed too close to an air movement source, it will need to be re-located.

Tip – Ensure smoke alarms are not installed too close to split-systems, ceiling fans or air vents.



Electrical Issues

Electrical issues can cause smoke alarms to activate. Unstable power or power interruptions can cause electrical spikes in the circuit, this may cause the smoke alarm to beep or alarm for a short period of time. Smoke alarms are commonly installed on a lighting circuit shared with other electrical products. These products can create electrical noise or interference which can activate the smoke alarm. This electrical noise and electro-magnetic interference may cause the smoke alarm to beep or alarm when the electrical products are activated. Products such as sweeping fans, lighting dimmers, poor quality LED lights, and heat lamps are examples.

Tip – Installing an [EMI filter](#) will help to filter out electrical interference. We recommend that smoke alarms be installed on their own sub-circuit to avoid false alarm caused by electrical interferences from other electrical equipment.

***The above instructions are published by PSA smoke alarms Australia. We follow the same guidelines as we integrate PSA smoke alarms with all our Visualert™ systems.

Instructions taken from : <https://www.psaproducts.com.au/smoke-alarm-faqs/>