

**[Sound of an emergency alert siren fading in and out]**

1. **Host:** Attention homeowners and buyers, this is not a drill! Today, I'm sounding the alarm on the hidden hazards that could be lurking within your home. From unseen structural issues to visible electrical concerns, join me as I equip you with the knowledge needed to safeguard one of your biggest investments. Stay tuned, because what you don't know can hurt you!
2. **[Intro Music] Perhaps building sounds?**
  - a. **Host:** Hello and welcome to The Inspector Connection, the podcast dedicated to making your home a safer place, one episode at a time. I'm your host, Paul Rochette, and today we're diving into the world of smoke detectors **(PAUSE)** a device that can literally save lives.
3. **(Introduction)**
  - a. **Host:** Since this is the first podcast let me introduce myself. I'm Paul Rochette, a certified home and radon inspector and sole proprietor of EBC Inspections. My main goal is to help homeowners and buyers uncover important insights about their homes that often go unnoticed.
4. **(Mission Statement)**
  - a. **Host:** At EBC Inspections, I'm committed to providing thorough and honest home inspections that empower homeowners and buyers with the knowledge they need to make informed decisions. My mission is to deliver comprehensive assessments with integrity, ensuring peace of mind and confidence in understanding the intricacies of your home
  - b. **Host:** So, today let's start with smoke detectors. According to the National Fire Protection Association referred to as (NFPA), in 2024, nearly three out of five deaths were due to home fires in properties without smoke alarms. Homes with working smoke alarms have a death rate from home fires that's about 60 percent lower than homes without alarms or with alarms that failed to operate. This statistic doesn't include issues from nonfunctioning power sources, such as dead or missing batteries. Smoke detectors are our first line of defense during a fire, offering an early warning that can be life-saving. There are two main types of smoke detectors: ionization and photoelectric. Ionization detectors are typically more sensitive to flaming fires, while photoelectric detectors respond faster to smoldering fires. For optimal protection, it's best to use both types throughout your home.
5. **[Segment Break Sound]**

**Host:** Most people may not realize that smoke detectors have a shelf life, which varies depending on the manufacturer. According to the NFPA, smoke detectors

should typically be replaced every 10 years, as indicated by the manufacture date on the device. So many people I have spoken with just forget about them. It's like a plug in and forget it device. Leaving it to chance they still work until a battery needs replacing. It may seem too frequent to test them monthly, but it is recommended by both manufacturers and the NFPA, as well as good practice. I recommend being on a yearly schedule to replace the batteries.

**Lets do a trivia question** – If a smoke detector's battery is one year old and has never alerted to the presence of fire or smoke, can we assume that the battery is still functioning properly? Yes, or No

**The answer is No.** I have seen smoke detector batteries last longer than a year, however; even in monitor power mode, the battery still drains. Then, if it needs to go off, it will drain even faster and after that it stops working. It's best to just replace them every year, to be safe. While replacing the battery, clean the unit according to the manufacturer's directions. Most can be cleaned with soft cloth, or vacuum, but no cleaning solutions.

Always adhere to the manufacturer's placement guidelines, as proper detector placement can be rather involved, especially near bathrooms, kitchens and furnaces. The rule is to place the smoke detector high on the wall or ceiling, because typically smoke rises.

6. **How about another trivia question** – If a smoke detection device is under professional monitoring and it goes off during testing or battery replacement, is it possible to cancel the response of the fire department? Yes, No, or it depends.

**The answer is it depends.** The monitoring company will reach out to the home owner first. If there is a delay in reaching you, the fire department will most likely be alerted. This happened to me once. My smoke alarm was chirping, meaning a battery needed replacing. So, what does every one do at 3 AM, while sleeping soundly? Jump up and go to the annoying detector. First, I was not thinking clearly, so I pulled and replaced the battery. Meanwhile my monitoring service called me, while I explained what happened, they apparently already sent the signal to the fire department. About 7 minutes later, both police and fire arrived. No one was happy.

Before testing your smoke detector, or performing maintenance, understand how your monitoring service panel works. As with mine, I would need to put my system into test mode first. This prevents the alert from sending, allowing you to do whatever is needed. Each manufacture is different, but all systems can be placed into a type of test mode. Just learn and understand how to use your system. It's important to know, some monitored companies require additional steps in changing the batteries for smoke detectors. Please read and understand those. Doing it wrong can also set the smoke alarm off after removing it from test

mode. Each monitoring service might require additional steps beyond putting system into test. With mine, the battery had to be replaced a specific way, or would go off because the additional steps were not taken.

### [Segment Break Sound]

7. **Host:** "Key takeaways from this podcast: ensure your smoke detectors are functional, working, and properly placed. Here are some important sounds to recognize from your smoke detectors:
- Three beeps in a row: Indicates smoke or fire; evacuate immediately.
  - A single chirp every 30-60 seconds: Indicates a low battery that needs replacing.
  - If your smoke detector continues to chirp every 30-60 seconds, after you've replaced the battery with a new one, it's a sign the unit has reached the end of its life and must be replaced.
  - If the Smoke detector has a non replacable battery, or hard wired and chirps one time, replace the unit.
  - Some of the newer detectors, if you hear three quick chirps, the unit has an issue.
  - Five chirps in a row, the unit is at the end of its life.
  - If your system is monitored, ensure you follow the specific procedures to disable the monitoring signal before testing or replacing batteries, following all steps for the devices.
  - Get on a regiment to replace your batteries every year.
  - Keep all your smoke detectors free of dust.
  - Don't be like me, in your pj's, trying to incorrectly replace a battery, just to have police and fire department show up. Take your time and read what you must do.
  - Educate the entire family. Make sure everyone understands the alert sounds."

### [Closing Music]

8. **(Encourage Listeners)**
- a. **Host:** "Thank you for tuning into The Inspector Connection! If you found today's episode helpful please like and subscribe. If you want to stay updated with more tips and insights, I encourage you to visit our website at [EBCInspections.com](http://EBCInspections.com). Don't forget to follow us on social media like Apple Podcast, Spotify, Facebook, Instagram, Google Podcasts and Amazon Music. for the latest updates, resources, and community discussions. Join me online and be part of our growing community dedicated to informed and empowered homeownership!"