

Fire Safety Awareness for deaf and hard of hearing people

Many deaf or hard of hearing people cannot use ordinary smoke alarms to alert them to the dangers of a fire. It is important that everyone makes sure their homes are safe and have a suitable smoke alarm fitted.

Can smoke alarms save lives?

Yes! Smoke alarms **can** help to keep you safe. Smoke alarms give you an early warning alert giving you valuable extra time to make your escape. More people's lives can be saved if you make sure you have a working smoke alarm in your home.

Are there smoke alarms for deaf and hard of hearing people?

Yes there are smoke alarms designed for deaf and hard of hearing people. There are different types available; some smoke alarms come with flashing lights and/or a vibrating pad to go under the pillow at night, or some smoke alarms can transmit signals to a vibrating paging system. Ordinary smoke alarms make a piercing, high-pitched sound so if you have a hearing loss or when you take your hearing aids out at night time you may not hear the alarm, so having a smoke alarm designed for deaf and hard of hearing people will make sure you will be alerted.

How do I get a smoke alarm that is suitable for me?

- First of all contact your local fire service to ask for a free home fire safety check. Tell them that you are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Your fire service will give you good advice about where you should fit your smoke alarm and what type of smoke alarm is best for your situation. There are different types of smoke alarms available.
- Contact your local social services department to find out if you are eligible for help with purchasing a smoke alarm.
- If you are not eligible for help, you can purchase a smoke alarm from many different suppliers who supply equipment for deaf and hard of hearing people, you will be able to search on the internet.
- Make sure the smoke alarm

has the two marks to show it has passed the proper standards for safety. For further information what to look out for please see the booklet that can be found on the following website;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/make-your-home-safe-from-fire>

This booklet can also give you lots of helpful advice on how to keep your home safe and what to do in an emergency.

- When your smoke alarm is fitted make sure you test your alarm every month to check it is working. Before you go to bed, go through the 'bedtime checklist' which you will also find at the back of the booklet located on this website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/make-your-home-safe-from-fire>

- Make sure all your windows and doors are working and accessible and not stuck or blocked. Windows and doors are important escape routes.
- Make sure you have registered your mobile phone to the Emergency SMS service. If you are registered with them you will be able to contact the ambulance, fire, police and coastguard from your mobile phone by sending a text message to 999 or 112.

For information on how to register your mobile phone go to;

<https://www.ngts.org.uk/how-to-use-ngt/contact-999-using-ngt.html>

Or check out the DMCS website where you will find a video explaining this service;

<https://www.deaf-dmcs.org/emergency-card>

What do I do if there is a fire?

- Make sure you leave your property straight away, **do not** try to save your property.
- If the room is full of smoke, remember to crawl low, try to keep under the smoke and keep your mouth covered.
- Never open doors that are hot to touch.
- When you have escaped outside, call the emergency services. (make sure you register your mobile now with the Emergency SMS service see above for instructions.)

iDeaf - London Deaf Information Service bringing a change to the lives of deaf and hard of hearing people.

Address: 218 Tollgate Road, Beckton, London, E6 5YA

Email: ask.ideaf@gmail.com

Website: ideaf.life.weebly.com