

## WHY DO I NEED SMOKE DETECTORS IN MY HOME?

Smoke detectors save lives by providing an early warning of fire. They sound a loud alarm when they sense smoke, which develops in the early stages of a fire. This is especially important at night, when families are asleep. The alarm can awaken you and your family so you have a better chance of leaving the house before smoke and fire block your escape routes.



Most fire-related deaths result from the inhalation of smoke or toxic gases, not from fire itself. Since the 1970s, when residential smoke detectors became readily available to consumers, there has been

a dramatic decrease in home fire deaths... nearly 50 percent. Today, well over 90 percent of American homes have at least one smoke detector. The small percentage of homes without any smoke detectors account for half of the home fire deaths in the U.S. each year.

### VALLEY HILL STATION LOCATIONS

**Headquarters:** 1675 Willow Road

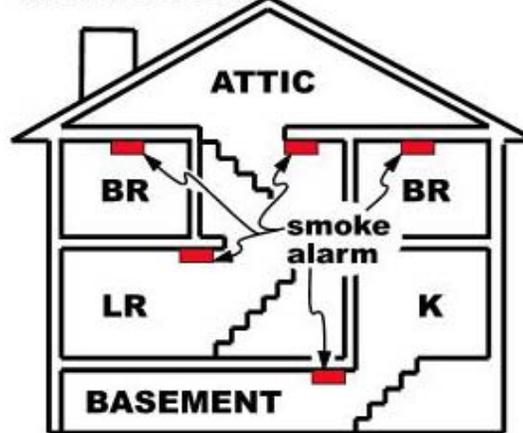
**Station 2:** 458 Crab Creek Road

**Station 3:** 205 Gateway Drive

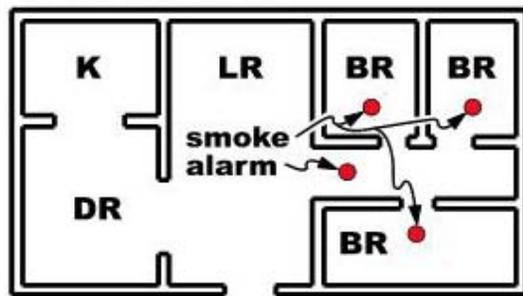
**Station 4:** 1914 Brevard Road

### PLACE ONE SMOKE ALARM ON EVERY FLOOR AND SLEEPING ROOM

#### MULTI-STORY



#### SINGLE LEVEL



# Facts about Smoke Detectors



828.692.2581



[www.valleyhillfire.com](http://www.valleyhillfire.com)

To schedule a  
**FREE HOME FIRE  
SAFETY INSPECTION**

Contact Fire & Life Safety  
Officer Alan Shaver at  
828.692.2581 x102

**Mailing Address: PO Box 726  
Hendersonville, NC 28793**

## HOW SMOKE DETECTORS WORK

Smoke detectors use one of two methods (or a dual-sensing combination) to detect the presence of smoke:

- Photoelectric detectors use a small light source. They work best on fires with visible smoke, such as from burning mattresses and bedding.
- Ionization detectors use a very tiny amount of radioactive material and two electrically charged plates to sense smoke. These work best on flaming fires, such as from burning paper, which produce less visible smoke.

## WHICH TYPE IS BEST?

The latest smoke detectors use both detection methods in the same device. Dual-sensing smoke detectors offer the best overall protection and the earliest possible warning. If your home is already equipped with either type of single-sensing smoke detectors, you might consider replacing them with the new dual-sensing model.

## CONSIDER ADDED PROTECTION

- **Interconnection:** All the smoke detectors in your home can be wired together, so that when one unit detects smoke, the alarms sound in all the units. Consult a qualified electrician.
- **Central station monitoring:** Through a telephone line, your smoke detector can be connected to the office of a security company. If the smoke detector activates, the security company will get a signal and can notify the fire department. This is an especially valuable feature when the home is unoccupied. Consult a home security company.
- **For the hearing impaired:** Smoke detectors are available with extra loud alarms or extremely bright strobe lights that will awaken and alert hearing-impaired individuals.



## INSTALLING SMOKE DETECTORS

There should be at least one smoke detector on every level of your home, except unoccupied attic space. On floors with bedrooms, the smoke detectors should be placed in the hallway near the bedrooms. If occupants usually sleep with their bedroom doors closed, then a smoke detector should be placed inside each bedroom.

Single unit, battery-operated smoke detectors can be installed with just a screwdriver. County and city fire codes now require “hard-wired” smoke detectors to be connected to the electrical system in new home construction. These should be installed by a qualified electrician.



Smoke rises, so detectors should be installed high on the wall (6” to 12” below the ceiling) or on the ceiling (6” to 12” from the nearest wall). They should not be placed near windows, doors that lead outside or ventilation ducts, which can interfere with their operation.

Smoke alarms should never be painted or decorated in any manner. This could keep them from working properly.

## MAINTENANCE: VITAL – AND EASY

Smoke detectors require just a small amount of maintenance to keep them operating properly:

- Check smoke detectors every month by using the test button.
- Carefully vacuum the dust from each smoke detector’s air intake vents. Open the hinged or removable cover to make cleaning easier.
- Change batteries twice a year, or more often as needed. (Some hard-wired smoke detectors have batteries, too, as back-up power.) A good rule of thumb is to install new batteries when clocks are reset in the spring and fall for daylight-saving time.
- Battery-operated smoke detectors also will emit a “chirping” sound if the battery fails during the year. Replace the battery immediately if this happens.



Smoke detectors should be replaced every 10 years. Always select a smoke detector that has a test button, a hinged or removable cover for cleaning, and has been approved by Underwriters Laboratory or another nationally recognized testing laboratory.