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NEWS RELEASE

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New Law Requires Dual Sensor Smoke Detectors

DUBUQUE, Iowa – A new Iowa law that goes into effect April 1, 2009, will require all new residential construction to be equipped with dual sensor smoke detectors. This will apply to all homes, dormitories, and multi-unit residential buildings.

Dual-sensor detectors contain both a photoelectric sensor to detect slow, smoldering fires and an ionization sensor to detect rapidly spreading, flaming fires. These detectors should not be confused with the combination smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

“With this new law, the State Fire Marshal is addressing the fact that older smoke detectors are reaching their ‘life expectancy,’” said City of Dubuque Fire Marshal Mark Ludescher. “This new law is designed to utilize new technology to help prevent fire-related deaths.”

Most detectors in homes currently use ionization technology. The new law does not require smoke detectors in existing homes to be replaced with dual-sensor detectors as long as they meet the manufacturer’s recommendations for use, installation, and life expectancy. However, when it is time to replace smoke detectors in existing residences, the law requires that they are replaced with dual-sensor detectors.

(MORE)

“Homeowners and landlords need to take a look at their current smoke detectors to determine if they’ve reached their manufacturer’s life expectancy, which can be found stamped on the actual detector. It’s documented that after they reach their 10-year date, they will not function well or at all,” said Ludescher. He also encourages homeowners and landlords to change their smoke detectors’ batteries when they change their clocks to Daylight Saving Time on November 2.

To learn more about the new law, visit the State Fire Marshal’s website at www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/index.shtml or call the Iowa State Fire Marshal Division at 515-725-6145, or contact the Dubuque Fire Department at 563-589-4160 or fire@cityofdubuque.org.

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