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Alarm FAQs

Looking for more information? Please review the following list of frequently asked questions. The most commonly asked questions are listed first. Additional questions are also provided by alarm type. If additional help is needed, please [Contact Us](#).

You can also search our [Knowledge Base](#) for more information.

Most Commonly Asked Questions

Question: What causes my FireX alarm to beep or chirp?

Answer: The smoke alarm will chirp at a regular interval, about once every minute, when the battery is weak and needs to be replaced. On units with the Visible Low Battery Indicator feature, the red LED will blink approximately 4 times a minute. Replace with a fresh 9 Volt battery. FireX Alarms are certified to be used with the following models of batteries: Eveready 216, 522, 1222, Duracell MN 1604 or Ultralife U9VL-J. Do not use any type of rechargeable battery. Once the battery is replaced, the beeping or chirping should stop. If the unit chirps at seemingly random times or at random intervals after replacing the battery, check for the following conditions:

1) The battery may be loose, or improperly installed.

Make sure the battery is fresh, and that it is snapped in all the way so it cannot be shaken loose. It's possible that battery connections may not be making good contact with the battery. Disconnecting and re-connecting the battery once or twice will likely fix this condition. On units with a front-load battery, be sure that the battery compartment door is closed completely.

2) The smoke alarm cover may be dirty.

Dust and insects can collect in the sensing chamber of the alarm. An accumulation of dust in the sensing chamber can cause the unit to chirp. It is good practice to clean the smoke alarm when you change the battery.

Cleaning smoke alarms:

Remove the alarm from the wall or ceiling and hold the unit on its side. There is a gap between the front cover and the back plate. Take a vacuum cleaner with a crevice tool and clean all around the gap area. Pay most attention to the sensor, which you will see in the gap area. The sensor looks like a small tin can with slots in it.

3) Reset the alarm.

Most current model smoke alarms have a processor that retains certain error conditions, such as a weak battery. The error condition should reset when the battery is replaced but sometimes it does not and must be manually reset to clear the error.

To reset an AC unit with a battery backup:

Turn off the power to the smoke alarm at the circuit breaker. Remove the smoke alarm from the mounting bracket and disconnect the power. Remove the battery. Press and hold the test button for at least 15 seconds. The unit may chirp or alarm for a few seconds before going silent. Reconnect the power and reinstall the battery. The unit will chirp once when the power is restored and should not chirp afterwards."

To reset a DC only unit:

Remove the battery. Press and hold the test button for at least 15 seconds. The unit may chirp or alarm for a few seconds before going silent. Reinstall the battery. The unit will chirp when the

battery is first connected but should not chirp afterwards.

4) An electrical condition may be causing the power to the unit to be interrupted. If the AC power to the unit is interrupted, the unit will chirp when the power is restored. This could be caused by power surges.

If the chirping seems to occur at about the same time in the evening or morning, it could be due to a surge created when the power company switches electrical grids to meet demand.

Check to see if the chirp (or chirping) occurs when something else in the house is turned on such as an exhaust or attic fan, a heater, etc. If the smoke alarm is connected to a circuit with such a device, the alarm may chirp when the other device is switched on. If this is the case and the device is plugged into a wall outlet, move it to another outlet on a different circuit. If it is a hardwired device, have an electrician investigate it.

5) Replace the alarm.

If none of these conditions exist and the suggestions don't alleviate the symptom, the smoke alarm should be replaced. Smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years. FireX smoke alarms have a 5-year warranty from date of purchase. A date code stamped on the label attached to the back of the unit. If the unit is within warranty, send it to the following address for warranty repair or replacement:

FireX Warranty
28C Leigh Fisher Blvd.
El Paso, TX 79906

FireX smoke alarms can be purchased from most electrical wholesalers and distributors, several with online businesses.

Question: What causes my FireX alarm to false alarm (alarm sounds when no smoke is present)?

Answer: Many conditions that cause the smoke alarms to beep or chirp may also cause them to go into alarm when they sense smoke or something in the alarm chamber.

1) Age may be a factor. You should replace your alarm if it is 8 - 10 years old. The date code can be found on the back of the alarm.

2) The alarm may be installed in a location prone to nuisance alarms. Such areas are:

- near kitchens where they may be exposed to smoke from cooking.
- near bathrooms or areas where they may be exposed to steam.
- areas that are very dusty, such as attics or garages.
- areas that are in direct airflow such as near a heating vent or return.

Check the location of the smoke alarm; try re-installing it a few feet away.

Nuisance alarms can also be caused by external contaminants.

3) There may be dust or insects in the alarm chamber. Even in clean environments dust will collect in the sample chamber. This will cause the alarm to be overly sensitive and cause it to go into alarm. Insects can have the same effect and the movement of the insects in and out of the chamber will cause the alarm to go into alarm. If the unit seems to go into alarm mostly at night, it is probably due to insects.

To clean the alarm:

Remove it from the wall or ceiling and hold the unit on its side. There is a gap between the front cover and the back plate. Use a vacuum cleaner with a crevice tool or a can of compressed air and clean all around the gap area. Pay most attention to the sensor. The sensor looks like a small tin can with slots in it. This needs to be thoroughly cleaned since dust or insects may be caught in the sensor.

4) Cleaning solvents (particularly ammonia), Latex paints, and high dust conditions associated with construction can cause the unit to go into alarm. Eliminate the condition and clean the alarm.

5) Reset the unit. Disconnect the alarm from the electrical power (if applicable) and remove the battery. Hold in the test button for approximately 10-15 seconds. This will reset your alarm. Re-install your alarm after this procedure.

Question: Why does the red light blink once every 40 seconds?

Answer: The blinking or flashing red light every 40-45 is normal operation. This is a battery test the unit performs. When the battery is weak the unit will beep or chirp approximately once a minute and the red LED will flash approximately 4 times a minute.

Question: What type of battery can I use in my FireX alarm?

Answer: FireX smoke and heat alarms will accept 9-volt the following 9-volt batteries as replacements: Eveready 216, 522, 1222, Duracell MN 1604 or Ultralife U9VL-J. Do not use any type of rechargeable battery.

Question: Why do my alarms in my unfinished basement keep sounding the alarm?

Answer: Smoke alarms located in environments such as unfinished basements, garages, and attics, tend to be exposed to more dust and insects than those in other rooms. An accumulation of dust in the alarm chamber will cause the alarm to go into alarm. As the dust accumulates in the detecting chamber, the sensitivity will increase causing the frequency of nuisance alarms to increase as well.

Insects can have the same effect and the movement of the insects in and out of the chamber will cause the alarm to go into alarm. If the unit seems to go into alarm mostly at night, it is probably due to insects. Smoke alarms in these environments will have to be cleaned more often.

To clean your alarms, remove them from the wall or ceiling and hold the unit on its side. There is a gap between the front cover and the back plate. Use a vacuum cleaner with a crevice tool or a can of compressed air and clean all around the gap area. Pay most attention to the sensor. The sensor looks like a small tin can with slots in it. This needs to be thoroughly cleaned since there is dust or debris caught in the sensor. This should fix the problem.

Question: Where can I buy FireX products?

Answer: FireX products, including smoke alarms, CO alarms, and combination alarms are available through your local electrical wholesalers and distributors. They are also available from some national distributors.

Some FireX products are available in retail stores such as:

Walmart

Models: FireX smoke alarm model 4618

Menard's (stores in the Midwest)

Models: 4618, 4000, 4009, 4480, 4671CL, 4003

Smoke/CO alarm model 12000

Smoke/CO alarm model 7000DCL

(Note: Some are only available in multi-packs. Please check with the store.)

Question: Why does the alarm go off during cold weather?

Answer: The unit may go into alarm only when it is very cold out or if a door adjacent to a heated area is opened, such as in an entry way. This is due to condensation (water vapor) in the detection chamber. The sensor is a particle-sensing device and when water condenses in the sensor, the unit will go into alarm. The operating temperature on FireX smoke alarms is between 40 and 100 degrees Fahrenheit (4 - 38 degrees Celsius). If the unit is in a garage or attic, you may consider replacing it with a heat alarm which is not effected by condensation.

Question: How often should the battery be changed in my smoke alarm?

Answer: It is recommended that the battery in every smoke alarm be replaced at least once a year to ensure it is operating properly or any time the unit indicates that the battery is weak. The general rule is to replace the batteries when we switch to daylight savings time and / or when we switch back.

When the battery requires replacement, the alarm will sound a short beep or chirp approximately once every minute. At this time you must remove the old battery and replace it with a fresh battery of the

correct type.

Question: What is the warranty on FireX smoke alarms and how do I get it repaired or replaced?

Answer: If any smoke alarm does not sound when the test button is pressed, it should be replaced immediately. FireX smoke alarms include a 5 year warranty. If the unit fails while under warranty, return it to:

FireX Warranty
28C Leigh Fisher Blvd.
EL Paso TX 79906

A replacement unit will be sent to you.

Question: What should I do if nothing happens when the TEST button is depressed?

Answer: The TEST button must be held for at least 3 seconds before the unit will begin its test sounding. If the smoke alarm does not go into alarm and it is an AC unit, replace it immediately. If the unit is a battery-powered unit and it does not sound, it may have a weak battery. If the unit does not sound with a fresh battery or there is any concern or question about the reliability of the unit, it should be replaced. Smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years. If the unit is approaching the end of its service life, replace it. FireX smoke alarms have a 5-year warranty. The manufactured date is stamped on the label located on the back of the unit. If the is under warranty, send it to the following address:

FireX Warranty
28C Leigh Fisher Blvd.
EL Paso TX 79906

Please include your address for shipping and a brief description of the problem. A replacement unit will be sent to you.

Question: What is the difference between ionization and photoelectric type smoke alarms?

Answer: Currently, there are only two types of smoke alarms available to the general public. One is ionization and the other is photoelectric. Both are effective means of sensing smoke in residential environments.

The photoelectric type alarms are generally most effective at detecting slow, smoldering fires which smolder for hours before bursting into flame. Sources of these fires may include cigarettes burning in couches or bedding.

The ionization type alarms are generally most effective at detecting fast, flaming fires which consume combustible materials rapidly and spread quickly. Sources of these fires may include paper burning in a waste container or a grease fire in the kitchen. The National Fire Protection Agency recommends having both types of smoke alarms in your home.

Question: How do I order a replacement mounting bracket or power connector?

Answer: Mounting plates and power connectors are available for all current models at no charge. You can submit a request online to our [Technical Services](#) group or call us 1-800-445-8299. Please include the model number of the alarm and the quantity required along with your shipping address.

Question: When does steam from the bathroom or smoke from the kitchen set off an alarm?

Answer: Ionization type alarms are sensitive to smoke from the kitchen and steam from a bathroom. Consider moving the alarm a few feet away to avoid the condition.

You can also consider using a photoelectric alarm (#4480) near areas that are prone to steam or cooking smoke. Photoelectric alarms are less sensitive to these conditions.

FAQs by Alarm Type

Smoke Alarms

Question: What is the Alarm Locator (with latching LED) and why is it important?

Answer: When these smoke alarms are interconnected, the unit that initiates the alarm will have its red LED/light flashing rapidly. It will continue to flash rapidly until the test button is pushed. This allows the contractor and/or homeowner to quickly identify the unit that is initiating any nuisance alarms.

Question: Can I interconnect direct wire (AC) alarms with battery back-up (AC/DC) alarms?

Answer: We do not recommend interconnecting electric units with battery backup units because if AC power is lost to the circuit, only the alarms with battery back up will function (bearing that they have a good battery installed). This may give the user a false sense of security thinking that one battery back up alarm will power the entire circuit of electric alarms.

Question: I've removed the FireX® alarm and I still hear a beeping sound?

Answer: If you have removed the FireX smoke alarm and removed the batteries (if the model is equipped with batteries), the smoke alarm may still have a slight charge. To drain this charge, press and hold the test button for 10 seconds. If a beeping sound persists, there must be another device that is causing the beeping yet is less apparent than the smoke alarm. Some such devices are a carbon monoxide alarm, a smoke alarm in another location, a thermostat with a low battery indicator, a pager or a cordless phone.

Question: What is Quick Quiet™ False Alarm Control?

Answer: The false alarm control feature will quiet unwanted alarms when activated. To activate this feature, press the test button on the initiating alarm. This will reduce the smoke alarms sensitivity for a period of up to 15 minutes. During this time the red LED will flash approximately once every 10 seconds. Some models will emit 2 short beeps when the smoke alarm is returning to normal sensitivity level.

Question: Why won't a FireX® smoke alarm silence when I press the test button to activate the false alarm control feature?

Answer: If a FireX smoke alarm continues to alarm after attempting to activate the false alarm control feature, this means that there is too much smoke present for this feature to activate. Remember, this feature does not "turn off" the smoke alarm, but rather only reduces its sensitivity for a period of time.

Question: Why does a FireX® smoke alarm emit 2 short beeps approximately 10 minutes after I press the test button?

Answer: The smoke alarm incorporates a feature called Quick Quiet™ False Alarm Control. This feature allows the user to manually silence the alarm during an unwanted activation. Pressing the test button at any time activates this feature (even if the alarm is not currently sounding its alarm). Once activated, this feature reduces the sensitivity of the alarm for a period of up to 15 minutes. After this period of time the smoke alarm automatically returns to normal sensitivity. To indicate that the alarm is returning to normal sensitivity, it will sound two short beeps. Please note that any time you press the test button you are activating False Alarm Control, even if you are just simply testing the alarm.

Question: Will the alarm sound if the power is out?

Answer: Only alarms with a battery or battery back-up will sound if electrical power to the home has been lost.

Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Question: Where should I install a CO alarm?

Answer: CO gas can be anywhere and everywhere. CO gas is equal to or slightly lighter than air, and disperses evenly with the air in a room. Therefore, install a CO alarm where air circulation is best. Do not mount a CO alarm within 1 foot of the ceiling/wall intersection or other dead air spaces. For earliest warning of CO presence we recommend that you install at least one CO alarm on every separate living level of your home.

Question: Where should I avoid installing a CO alarm?

Answer: Avoid installing a CO alarm near bathrooms or in shower areas; in closets, crawlspaces, unused attics or unheated areas; within 5 feet of any fuel burning appliance; within one foot of any wall or corner; in rooms where chemicals or cleaning supplies are frequently used; directly above a sink, bathtub or basin; directly above or below air exchange or heating vents and behind drapes, furniture or appliances or in any other dead air space.

Question: What amount of CO will cause a CO alarm to activate into alarm?

Answer: FireX CO alarms work within the industry guidelines of UL2034 and will alarm at a level of 70PPM (parts per million) of CO concentration within 240 minutes. As the level of CO concentration increases, this time frame decreases. For example, at a level of 400 PPM of CO concentration your CO alarm will alarm within 15 minutes.

Question: I've removed the FireX® CO alarm and I still hear a beeping sound?

Answer: If you have removed the FireX CO alarm and removed the batteries (if the model is equipped with batteries), the CO may still have a slight charge. To drain this charge, press and hold the test button for 10 seconds. If a beeping sound persists, there must be another device that is causing the beeping yet is less apparent than the CO alarm. Some such devices are a smoke alarm, a CO or smoke alarm in another location, a thermostat with a low battery indicator, a pager or a cordless phone.

Smoke/Carbon Monoxide Combination Alarms

Question: When interconnected with other alarms what will alarm first?

Answer: In the event of a smoke condition, the FireX® Smoke Alarms and the Smoke/CO Combo Alarm will alarm for smoke. In the event of a carbon monoxide condition the FireX Carbon Monoxide Alarms and the Smoke/CO Combo alarm will alarm for carbon monoxide. In the unlikely event of both conditions occurring at the same time, smoke will take priority and the FireX Smoke Alarms and the Smoke/CO Combo Alarm will alarm for smoke.

Question: What might cause a FireX®smoke/CO combo alarm to false alarm?

Answer: Smoke alarms are sensitive devices that are designed to respond to small particles of combustion (smoke). However, since smoke alarms do respond to particles in the air, they are susceptible to triggering an alarm when encountering particles in the air other than smoke. Typically, a build up of dust or debris in a smoke alarm may eventually result in a false alarm. Additionally, if small insects enter or nest in the internal detection chamber, the smoke alarm will sound its alarm horn. This is mostly prevalent in the late night hours when insects are most active. To help keep dust, debris and nesting insects out of the smoke alarm it is recommended to clean the alarm at least a couple times a year with a powerful vacuum cleaner or a small can of compressed air. You should also avoid installation in areas where these types of particles are commonly present such as garages and unfinished attics.

Question: Why won't the FireX® smoke/CO combination alarm silence when I press the test button to activate the false alarm control feature?

Answer: If the FireX smoke alarm continues to alarm after attempting to activate the False Alarm Control™ feature, this means that there is too much smoke or CO present for this feature to activate. Remember, this feature does not "turn off" the Smoke/CO Combo alarm, but rather only reduces its sensitivity for a period of time.

Heat Alarms

Question: What temperature does a FireX® heat alarm go into alarm at?

Answer: FireX heat alarms are designed to alarm at a fixed temperature of 135 F as measured at the heat alarm. When the temperature falls below 135 F the heat alarm will automatically reset.

Question: Will a FireX® 5700 heat alarm react to smoke?

Answer: FireX heat alarms are designed to alarm when presented with a certain temperature at the alarm. They will not react to smoke and should not be used to replace smoke alarms, but as a supplement to a complete smoke

alarm system.

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