



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **EVERYDAY HERO CT ASKS: DO YOU KNOW HOW OLD YOUR SMOKE ALARMS ARE?**

***“Don’t Wait-Check the Date! Replace Smoke Alarms Every 10 Years”***

**October 3, 2016 | Cromwell, CT** – October 9-15 is [Fire Prevention Week](#). This year the National Fire Prevention Association’s (NFPA)’s theme is “Don’t Wait-Check the Date! Replace Smoke Alarms Every 10 Years.” NFPA research shows that most American homes have at least one smoke alarm. However, most people don’t know how old their alarms are or how often they need to be replaced. The Everyday Hero CT volunteer firefighter recruitment campaign wants to be sure everyone in the community knows every smoke alarm has an expiration date as well as how to find that date.

“Smoke alarms do not last forever,” says Chief Fred Dudek, Everyday Hero CT program manager. “About 60 percent of home fire deaths happen in homes with either no working smoke alarms or no smoke alarms at all. One reason an alarm might not work is because it’s too old.”

The NFPA requires smoke alarms be replaced at least every 10 years, but because the public is generally unaware of this requirement, many homes have smoke alarms past their expiration date, putting people at increased risk.

To find out how old a smoke alarm is and its expiration date, simply look on the back of the alarm where the date of manufacture is marked. The smoke alarm should be replaced 10 years from that date (*not* the date of purchase). The Greenwich Fire Department also says smoke alarms should be tested monthly, and that batteries should be replaced once a year or when they begin to chirp, signaling that they’re running low.

According to the [NFPA website](#), Fire Prevention Week was established to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire, the tragic 1871 conflagration that killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures and burned more than 2,000 acres. The fire began on October 8, but continued into and did most of its damage on October 9, 1871.

### ***Volunteers Needed***

Eighty percent of all fire personnel in Connecticut are volunteers, and the majority of fire departments throughout the state are experiencing a volunteer shortage. Local fire departments need volunteers of all skill levels and abilities, people willing and able to respond to emergencies whenever called upon.

“The skills and experience gained as a volunteer firefighter are invaluable and have a positive and lasting impact on the lives of others,” says Dudek. “Those who join their local fire departments sign up for one of the most rewarding opportunities they’ll ever have.”

### ***About Everyday Hero CT***

A partnership of the [Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association](#) (CFCA) and the [International Association of Fire Chiefs](#) (IAFC), the Everyday Hero CT campaign is a two-year Volunteer Workforce Solutions (VWS) initiative designed to address the shortage of volunteer firefighters in Connecticut. It is helping achieve a viable and sustainable volunteer firefighter workforce for 15 Connecticut fire departments: Broad Brook Volunteer Fire Department, Cromwell Fire and EMS Department, Gales Ferry Volunteer Fire Company, Gardner Lake Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. (Salem), Greenwich Fire Department, Killingworth Volunteer Fire Department, Middlefield Volunteer Fire Company, Old Mystic Fire Department, Rocky Hill Fire Department, Somers Fire Department, Stamford Volunteer Firefighters Association, Trumbull Volunteer Fire Services, Westfield Fire Department (Middletown), Windsor Volunteer Fire Department, Wolcott Fire Department. Everyday Hero CT is funded by a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant awarded to the CFCA by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to develop a model to enhance the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters. For more information, visit [www.EverydayHeroCT.org](http://www.EverydayHeroCT.org).

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