

# Media Release

For immediate release

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## Smoke alarms - every home must have them

The Victoria Building Authority reminds Victorians of the legal requirement to have working smoke alarms.

This timely reminder comes after a mother and child were saved by a smoke alarm set off by a fire in the roof of their Mill Park home early today.

They were awoken by the alarm and able to leave their home safely.

VBA Director of Technical and Regulation Jarrod Edwards said when smoke alarms are installed and working, home occupants are warned of a fire early and have more time to evacuate.

“Most injuries and deaths caused by fires happen in the home.

“Smoke alarms are compulsory and must be installed in all homes, apartments and residential buildings. It is the legal responsibility of homeowners and landlords to install smoke alarms that work,” he said.

According to Mr Edwards, a homeowner can be fined by a local council for failing to have a smoke alarm installed. “However, the repercussions of not having a working smoke alarm can be far more severe.

“Fires in homes grow quickly and commonly fire deaths occur when smoke alarms are not working.

“A working smoke alarm can mean the difference between life and death.”

From 1 May 2014, the building regulations require new homes, apartments and residential buildings in Victoria to have interconnected alarms.

These provisions ensure that if there is a fire in one part of the building that all the alarms will alert people to a fire.

There are other precautions homeowners can take to make them safe from fires in their homes:

- Ensure your family has a home fire escape plan.
- Ensure that clothing, bedding and other flammable items are away from heaters or other ignition sources and electrical goods.
- Check electrical appliances for frayed cords and that power boards and switches are not overloaded.
- Make sure your smoke alarm batteries are checked and replaced annually.

For more information about how to stay safe and reduce the risk of a fire in your home, visit [www.homefiresafety.com.au](http://www.homefiresafety.com.au)

ENDS

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