

Smoke Alarms

Smoke alarms tend to make a high-pitched sound, which doesn't make them ideal for people with a high frequency deafness - the commonest type of deafness. In addition, when you remove your hearing aids before you go to bed, it may be that you will not be able to hear a smoke detector.

There are special smoke detectors on the market for people with a hearing loss. They all work in a similar way.

Features:

- Mains powered (with battery backup)
- Bedside unit or wall mounted unit
- Flashing light (strobe)
- Vibrating pad - goes under the pillow

If the smoke alarm is triggered then the light will flash, and the pad will vibrate waking you up. Additional lights are usually available if you want to use them in other parts of the house as well.

Where to get a smoke alarm from:

In some areas Social Services provide special smoke alarms free of charge for people who are hard-of-hearing or deaf. If you are in council property you may be able to get a smoke alarm from the council housing department. However, the rules vary widely from area to area.

If you are not able to get a smoke detector on fire long-term loan, then you may wish to buy one. You can purchase a special smoke alarm from £82.00 upwards.

Suppliers:

RNID Sound Advantage, FREEPOST, 1 Metro Centre, Welbeck Way, Peterborough PE2 7BR Tel: 01733 232607 Text: 01733 238020

Sarabec Ltd. 15 High Force Road, Middlesbrough TS2 1RH Tel: 01642 247789 Text: 01642 251310

Fire Safety Tips

1. Install smoke detectors ... and check them regularly.
2. Keep a torch in the bedroom, where you can find it.
3. Plan and practice an escape route ... plan two ways out of every room ... practice leaving the room in the dark.
4. Make sure that at least one of the windows in your bedroom opens far enough for you to be able to get out.
5. Learn how to use a fire extinguisher, and make sure that you keep one on each floor of the house. Make sure that you have a fire extinguisher in the kitchen, and a fire blanket.
6. Make sure that your house number is easily visible from the street.
7. Keep space heaters well away from everything else.
8. Keep an eye on smokers

What to do in a fire:

9. Never open a door until you have checked that the door is not hot - use the back of your hand. If the door is hot, don't open it ... the fire may be behind it! If the door feels cool, open it slowly.
10. Close all doors behind you.
11. Get everyone out as fast as possible do not go back into the house.
12. If there is smoke, then keep low to the floor.
13. If you are trapped in a room, block the bottom of the door to reduce the amount of smoke coming in.
14. Put a wet cloth over your nose and mouth.
15. Open the window and shout. Use a torch or bedsheet to attract attention.
16. If you have to go out of the window, throw anything that is soft out first ... pillows, duvet, clothes, then sit on the windowsill, turn round and lower yourself as far as possible before dropping down.