MEDIA RELEASE

Double change this daylight saving end on April 6

Daylight saving will now end on the first Sunday in April, giving everyone a week longer to enjoy the extra sunlight at the end of the day. The MFB and CFA also remind all Victorians to change their smoke alarm batteries when they change back their clocks.

*Change your clock, change your smoke alarm battery*, supported by Duracell, is an annual fire safety campaign promoting the importance of working smoke alarms. Smoke alarms provide a vital early warning signal in the event of a fire.

In 2007 the fire services recorded more than 11,000 residential fires nationally resulting in 70 deaths, nineteen of those in Victoria.

“Most of these deaths could have been prevented if the households had working smoke alarms,” said Assistant Chief Fire Officer Rob Taylor, MFB. “It’s tragic when you think lives could have been saved for as little as $5, the price of a long-lasting alkaline battery.”

Research by the Australasian Fire Authorities Councils found that the absence of a smoke alarm can increase the possibility of a fatality by 60%.

“People don’t realise when they are asleep they can’t smell smoke. That’s why smoke alarms are essential to ensure people sleeping in a house wake up and evacuate if a fire breaks out,” Assistant Chief Fire Officer Rob Taylor.

The MFB and CFA recommend you:

- Test smoke alarms monthly by pressing the test button with a broom handle.
- Vacuum smoke alarms every six months to clean the vents.
- Replace the battery annually with a long-lasting alkaline battery.
- Install a smoke alarm outside the sleeping areas on every level of a house, and install a smoke alarm in bedrooms if people sleep with their doors closed.
- Avoid locating smoke alarms near cooking appliances and bathrooms as the smallest amount of smoke or steam can activate them.

The fire services also recommend that all homes be fitted with Australian Standards-approved photo-electric smoke alarms. Public housing properties are fitted with hard-wired smoke alarms. It is the tenant’s responsibility to regularly clean and test the smoke alarm.

Duracell has been a sponsor of the campaign for 8 years. “Maintaining smoke alarms and replacing batteries annually is such a simple thing, but of life-saving importance. We’re proud to be able assist the fire services by providing batteries for their community replacement programs and helping spread this fire safety message to all Victorians,” said Jolie Egan, Duracell Public Relations Manager.

On April 6 remember: only working smoke alarms save lives.

For further information visit [www.changeyourbattery.com.au](http://www.changeyourbattery.com.au) or contact your local fire authority. The campaign is proudly sponsored by Duracell.

ENDS
Fire facts:

- One in five Australians will experience a house fire in their lifetime.

- House fires are more common in winter months, when people are using fires, heaters and other electrical equipment.

- The majority of deaths occur between 9pm and 6am, and the elderly (people aged 65 and over) have a disproportionately higher fire death rate compared to the rest of the population.

- Sound sleepers and people who have recently used alcohol or medications may not be awakened by a smoke alarm.

- Young children may sleep through the sound of a smoke alarm, so you must alert them to a fire and help them escape to safety.

- The deaf need additional features such as vibrating pads and/or a strobe light.

- In 2007 there were 3268 recorded residential fires in Victoria (MFB 1961 & CFA 1307)