



Fire Alarm PR Handbook

Promote Sensible
Fire-Prevention Measures in the Community!

Supervised by: Fire and Disaster Management Agency,
Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications



Why should I install a residential fire alarm?

Legislation and background

◎The installation of residential fire alarms is required in every home.

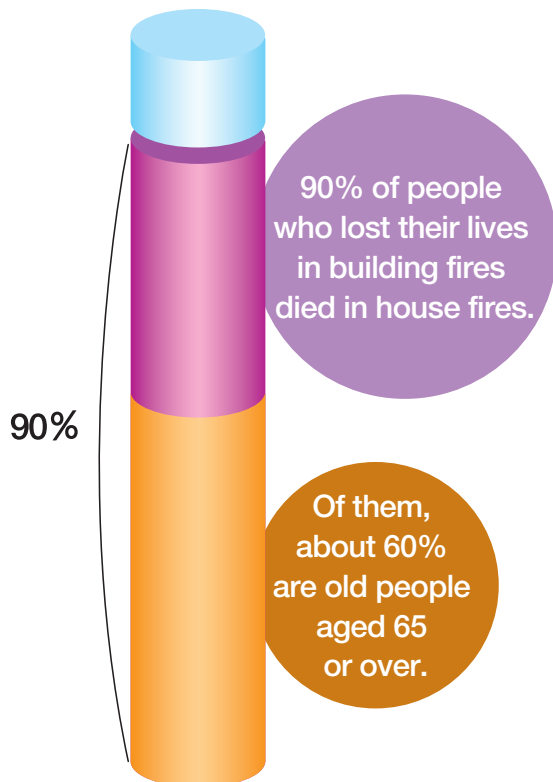
Previously, only some homes in Japan, such as large-scale apartment complexes, were required to install residential fire alarms, so the present situation is that **almost no** individual houses or small-scale apartment buildings have them.

In June 2004, however, the Fire Service Law was revised, and municipal ordinances now stipulate, amongst other things, the places where residential fire alarms must be installed. **(As a minimum requirement, a residential fire alarm must be installed in a bedroom and, if the bedroom is on the second floor or higher, on the staircase.)**

Also, starting on June 1, 2006, the installation of residential fire alarms became compulsory for newly built houses. And for existing houses as well, **the date of compulsory installation is determined pursuant to the ordinance of the municipality where they are built.**

So from now on residential fire alarms must be installed in every home.

◎What are the statistics of residential fire fatalities?



What is a residential fire alarm like?

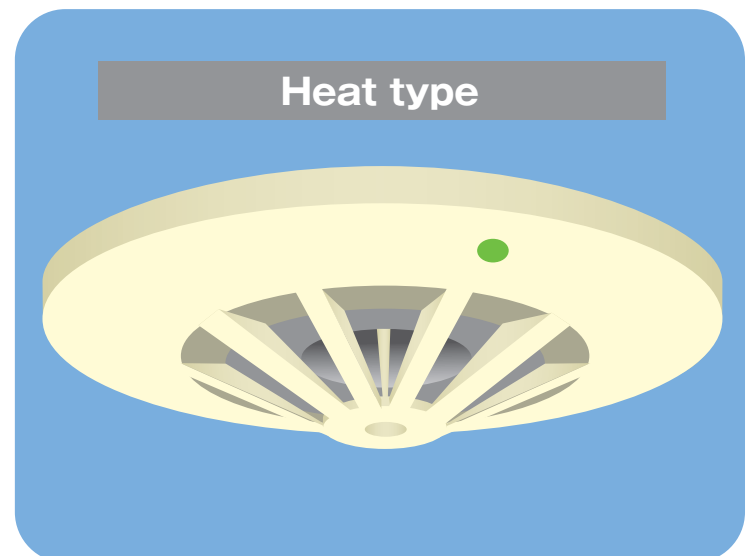
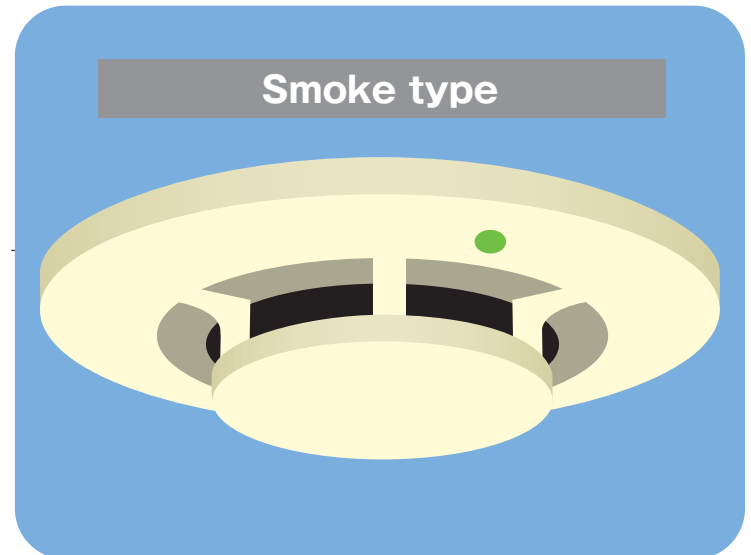
Residential fire alarms: types and mechanisms

◎What kinds of residential fire alarms are available?

What is a residential fire alarm like?

Residential fire alarms now commercially available can be roughly classified into the following two types: the type that reacts to smoke (**Smoke type**) and the type that reacts to heat (**Heat type**).

Also, smoke alarms can be divided into photoelectric types and ionization types. When installing a residential fire alarm, you should choose a smoke (photoelectric type) alarm, but choose a heat alarm around the cooker in the kitchen.

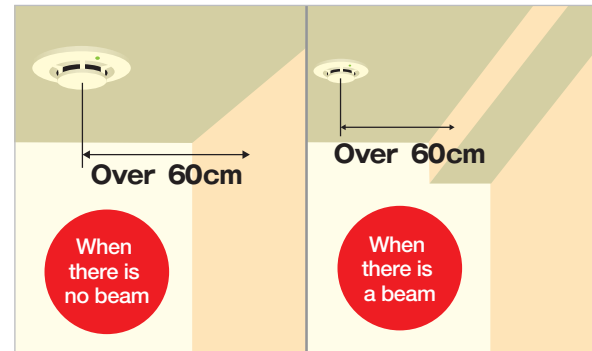


How can I install a residential fire alarm?

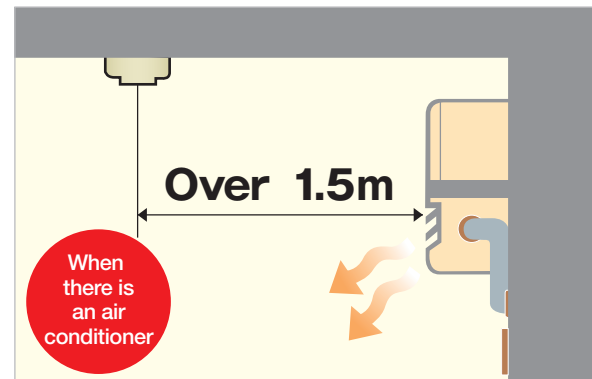
You can install a residential fire alarm on a ceiling or wall. Contact a shop that sells residential fire alarm for details or read the instruction manual to install them in the right places. In particular, please note the following points:

《How to install a residential fire alarm (example)》

Installation on the ceiling

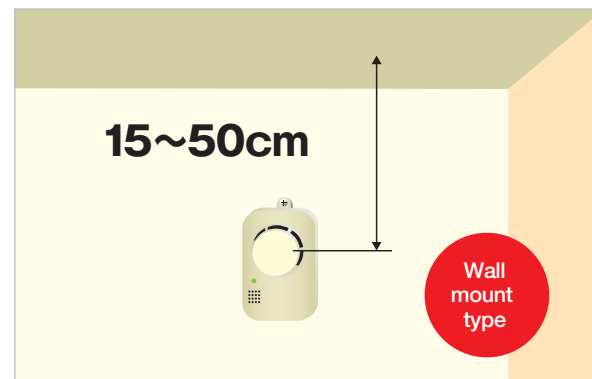


Note: Install the residential fire alarm by keeping a distance of 60 cm or more between its center (sensing parts) and the wall. If there is a beam on the ceiling, keep a distance of 60 cm or more between the center of the residential fire alarm and the beam.



Note: Keep a distance of 1.5 m or more around the exhaust area of an air conditioner or ventilation fan.

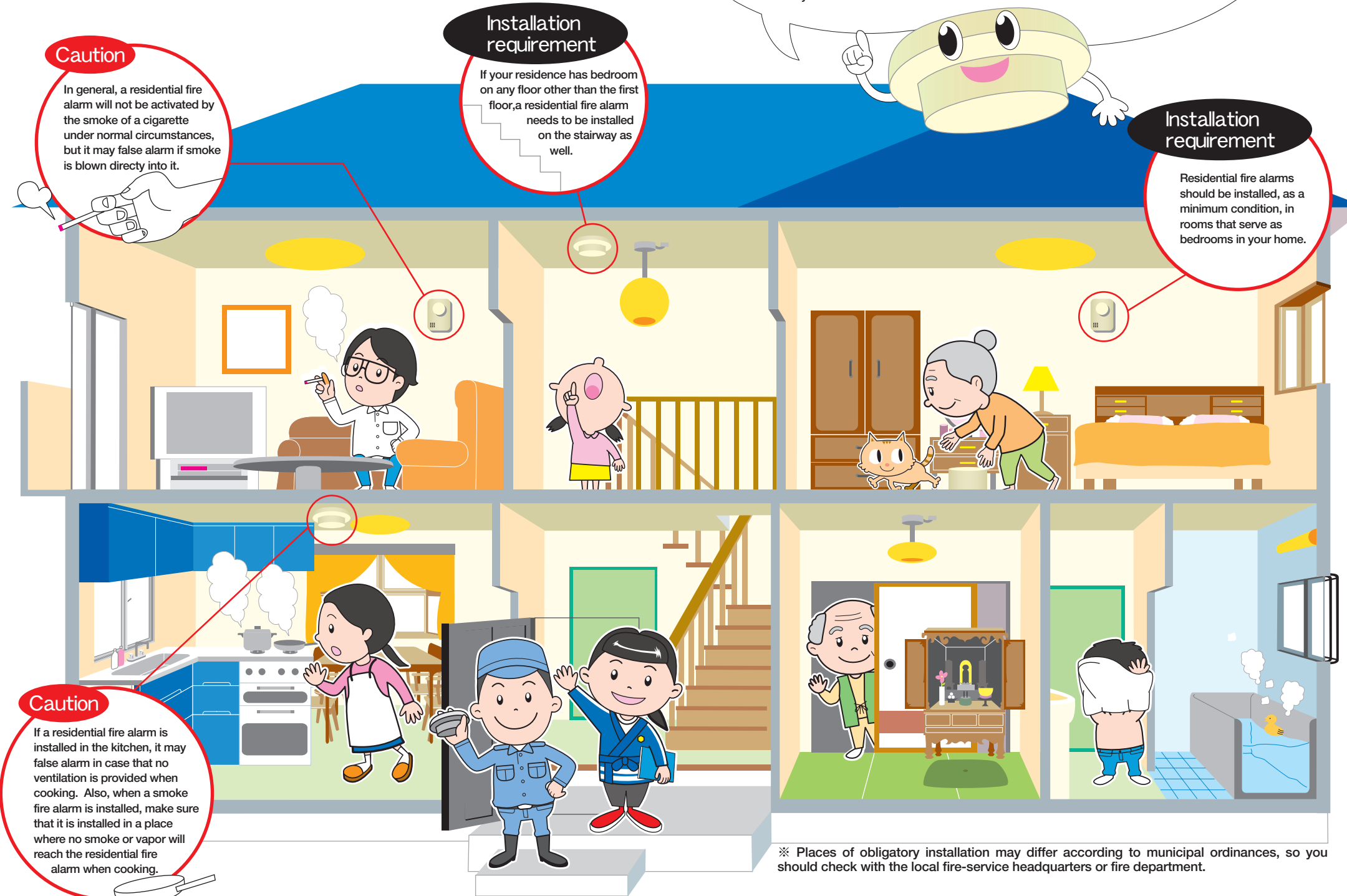
Installation on the wall



Note: The center (sensing parts) of the residential fire alarm should be located between 15 to 50 cm of the ceiling.

How do I install a residential fire alarm? What kind of maintenance is necessary?

Installation and maintenance



Caution
In general, a residential fire alarm will not be activated by the smoke of a cigarette under normal circumstances, but it may false alarm if smoke is blown directly into it.

Installation requirement
If your residence has bedroom on any floor other than the first floor, a residential fire alarm needs to be installed on the stairway as well.

Installation requirement
Residential fire alarms should be installed, as a minimum condition, in rooms that serve as bedrooms in your home.

Caution
If a residential fire alarm is installed in the kitchen, it may false alarm in case that no ventilation is provided when cooking. Also, when a smoke fire alarm is installed, make sure that it is installed in a place where no smoke or vapor will reach the residential fire alarm when cooking.

Where should I install residential fire alarms in my home?

It is stipulated that residential fire alarms should be installed, **primarily and as a minimum condition, in bedrooms and also on the staircase if the bedroom is located on the second floor or higher.** (If the bedrooms are located on the first floor, it is not compulsory to install one on the staircase or in a corridor on the first floor.)

Residential fire alarms should be installed on the ceiling or wall as a general rule, and this also applies when installing a residential fire alarm on a staircase. First, they should be installed in rooms used as bedrooms, as well as in corridors and on staircase that will serve as evacuation routes. Safety is enhanced by installing them in other rooms as well, where necessary.

What about maintenance?

Residential fire alarms are critical in times of emergency, but they may go out of order or need replacement, like home electrical appliances, when a long period elapses after their installation. Therefore, it is recommended that they are maintained by paying attention to the following points to ensure that they go off when a fire happens.

Three points in maintaining residential fire alarms

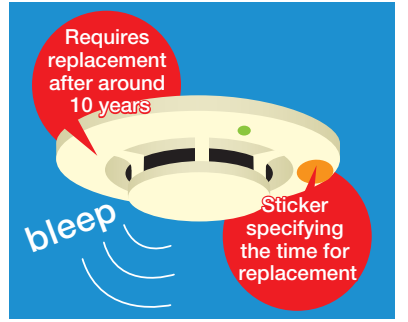
1 Replace the batteries if the residential fire alarm is a dry-cell type.

Dry-cell residential fire alarms must have their batteries replaced. It is recommended that you inspect the operation of the residential fire alarm at regular intervals and replace the batteries immediately if you suspect that they are flat. Also, a short time before the batteries go flat, residential fire alarms alert you to the need to replace the batteries by signal such as sound or lighting.

2 Residential fire alarm equipment needs to be replaced after around 10 years of use.

A sticker attached to the residential fire alarm specifies the time for replacement. Alternatively, the residential fire alarm alerts you to the need to replace it with a beep or suchlike when the time arrives. The operating life of a fire alarm is generally around 10 years.

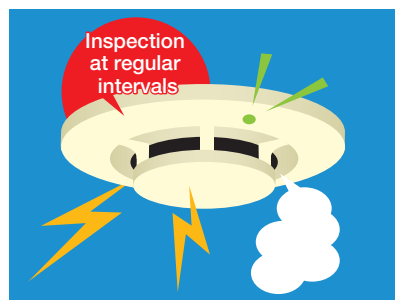
For details, check the instruction manual supplied with the residential fire alarm when you at the time of purchase.



3 Test the residential fire alarm at regular intervals to check if it works.

Test the residential fire alarm at regular intervals to check if it goes off (once a month is an indicative standard). Also, when leaving your home for an extended period, test the residential fire alarm to check that it is working properly.

The inspection method may differ according to the type. Some residential fire alarms are inspected by pulling a string attached to the main body, while others are inspected by pushing a button. Therefore, you should check the inspection method at the time of purchase.



※ Places of obligatory installation may differ according to municipal ordinances, so you should check with the local fire-service headquarters or fire department.

◎Where can I buy one?

Residential fire alarms are sold together with fire extinguishers, etc at stores that handle household goods.

Note that approval by the Japan Fire Equipment Inspection Institute is available to provide quality assurance for residential fire alarms. As an indication when purchasing a residential fire alarm, you should choose one with the **NS mark** as shown below.



Aside from these outlets, to find a shop that sells residential fire alarms and similar items, contact your local fire department or the Residential Fire Alarm Consultation Office (tel.: 0120-565-911). Alternatively, check one on the following home pages:

Housing Fire Protection Measures Promotion Council

**Shops distributing residential fire alarms are listed on the website.
(Note: The contents of the website are written in Japanese only.)**

URL <http://www.jubo.go.jp/index2.html>

Japan Fire Protection Association

5th Floor, Nissho Hall, 2-9-16 Toranomon, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-0001

Tel.: (03) 3591-7121, Fax: (03) 3591-7130

URL: <http://www.n-bouka.or.jp/>