Smoke Detector Awareness Information

We all know the importance of smoke detectors and changing the batteries in them when we change the clocks. It is critical that you also check for the proper operation of your smoke alarm. One very important smoke detector check has not been mentioned very often. Pushing the test button only lets you know that the alarm has power and that the warning horn is operational. It does NOT test the smoke sensor itself. The only proper way to test the sensor of your smoke detector is to generate smoke. The best and safest way to do this is to purchase a can of aerosol "smoke" specifically for this purpose. Thru the past couple of years I have witnessed four smoke alarms not function when smoke has been introduced into the sensor. These alarms would sound when the test button was pushed, but would not warn occupants of pending disaster due to malfunctioning sensors. The NFPA recommends that smoke alarms be replaced every ten years. This is due to the sensitivity of the sensors getting weak or going bad. It is also very important that if you sleep with the bedroom doors shut, that you install a smoke detector in every bedroom.   Many fires start in bedrooms. Careless smoking, overloaded extension cords, malfunctioning electric blankets are a few causes. If the bedroom door is shut, smoke will accumulate in the very room in which you sleep, and the smoke detector in the hallway may not sound soon enough to warn you and occupants in other bedrooms. Deadly levels of carbon monoxide will accumulate in your "sealed" bedroom. Oxygen levels will slowly drop to a level that will first cause confusion due to your brain being deprived sufficient oxygen, then you will lose consciousness because your body is starving for the necessary life sustaining oxygen.

In order to have peace of mind that your safety from smoke and fire is being monitored while you sleep, you must completely and thoroughly test the detector by pushing the test button monthly, and by generating smoke to make certain the sensor is working properly.