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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SUBJECT: Fire Dept. reminds residents to check and/or change batteries in smoke alarms

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As citizens "Fall Back" and have moved their clocks back one hour this weekend, the Joplin Fire Department urges families to take steps to make their homes safer by also checking the batteries in their smoke alarms.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) website, smoke alarms that are properly installed and maintained play a vital role in reducing fire deaths and injuries. Having a working smoke alarm cuts the chances of dying in a reported fire in half.

In addition, NFPA noted:

- Ninety-six percent of all homes have at least one smoke alarm, according to a 2010 telephone survey. Overall, three-quarters of all U.S. homes have at least one *working* smoke alarm.
- Almost two-thirds of home fire deaths in 2005-2009 resulted from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.
- When smoke alarms fail to operate, it is usually because batteries are missing, disconnected or dead. Almost one-quarter of the smoke alarm failures was due to dead batteries.

"We just want to encourage all residents that will holiday decorations and cooler weather approaching to be aware of the safety precautions they can take to protect their families and pets, this could be one of the most important things you do this year." said Fire Chief Mitch Randles.

For more information about fire protection and safety, visit the Association's site at http://www.nfpa.org.