

Smoke Detectors in Four Seasons Homes (Updated 6/21/2019)



Please note that this article deals only with smoke detectors. Carbon monoxide detectors are an entirely separate device.

Material and inspiration for this article was first introduced at the November 4, 2016 GCC by John Widomski, co-Chairman of the GCC and a Four Seasons homeowner.

These alarms were used throughout Four Seasons when the homes were built. They are FireX model 4618, and the oldest ones will have a manufacturing date of 2006 on the label, which is on the back side of the alarm itself. FireX was acquired by Kidde in 2008, and Kidde still supplies this model, but various examples of the online documentation disagree regarding features and operation. The best

owner's manual I could locate can be found at this link: (just click on it)

<http://www.utcccs-cdn.com/hvac/docs/2001/Public/02/User-Guide-Firex-i4618-i4718.pdf>

Testing the detector

Multiple detectors in your home will be interconnected to make them operate as one very noisy system, and will get their power from the house's electrical supply. As long as the green LED light is showing on each detector, and none are emitting any beeping sounds, they are receiving power and need no maintenance. To test their capability to sound an alarm, push and hold the round button in the center of each one for a few seconds and it will give three loud beeps. Hold the button down and interconnected ones will all beep together no matter which one you test. The three beeps will stop shortly after you release the button, but there may be further single beeps from any of the detectors during the next hour or so. Those will eventually stop altogether.

Replacing the backup battery



Each smoke detector uses a replaceable 9 volt battery for backup if the electricity should happen to go out. Watch the green LED for a bit and another tiny red LED next to it will blink about once every 40 seconds. The detector will remain silent. The red LED indicates that the battery has enough remaining charge to power the detector. When the battery's reserve power drops to the replacement level the red LED will still blink at about the same interval, but the detector will chirp along with it.

Replacing the battery is simple but you will need to do it from a step ladder. Get some assistance if you don't feel steady enough to risk it, and don't try to do it from a simple step stool, even if you can reach the ceiling with that. You need secure footing to do this.

To replace the battery, just slide back the rectangular cover that's on the same surface as the center test button, and the old battery can be slipped right out. You don't have to remove the

detector from its mount to do this. If the battery cover binds and won't completely uncover the battery, just put a little more pressure on it and it will pop loose. The cover doesn't come all the way off, just far enough to get easy access to the battery.

With the battery out, please note the red label inside the detector that shows the position of the + contact so the new battery goes back in the correct alignment.

Don't wait for a battery to conk out completely. Just because your batteries have been in use for several years with no problems doesn't mean they will work when needed. **The manufacturer of the alarm recommends that all the batteries be replaced at the same time once a year**, but if you don't do it exactly on the day there will be no harm done. Around April Fool's Day there will be public service reminders about this task. Use the Duracell Coppertop 9V battery that is commonly available everywhere, with number MN1604 on it.



Replacement of the entire detector

The manufacturer recommends that these alarms be replaced at eight to ten years of age, due to a gradual loss of sensitivity over time. Some literature states that the sensor itself breaks down, and some states that a layer of dust and contamination builds up around the sensor. Regardless, the ten year limit is up for most of our homes and replacement of these vital safety devices would seem to be well justified, especially given the modest cost involved.

Unfortunately the newer models are not compatible, when used in an interconnected system, with the 2006 to about 2007-2008 models, so you must replace all the old units at once.

[CLICK HERE](#) for replacements at a very competitive price of around \$13.00 each, and free shipping if you are an Amazon Prime member. Search Amazon a bit more and you can find contractor boxes of 4, 6, or 8 of these with a considerable per-unit savings. Share a purchase of multiple detectors with a neighbor or two and you both save.

For replacement of a complete detector, the circuit breaker in your electrical service box (usually in the garage) will be clearly marked and must be switched off. The new detector will come with a new ceiling mounting plate and a replacement wiring connector. The new parts are needed if you have detectors dated 2006 or 2007, but if your present detectors are 2008 or newer they may not be needed. The parts are pretty simple to install if you are the handy type, and the instructions cover this adequately.

If you don't feel comfortable doing this work, please hire an electrician. That's good advice.

Disposing of the old detectors

Please don't discard the old detectors in your weekly trash. They are classed as a type of hazardous waste that neither Greene nor Albemarle County currently accept.

Presently we have only one method of legal (and conscientious) disposal. The manufacturer, Kidde Fire Safety, accepts the old detectors after an email clearance application is received by Kidde for tracking. ***Carefully follow the instructions on the next page for the returns.***

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Thank you for your inquiry!

Provided certain criteria are met, Kidde can assist end-users (individuals) with the proper disposal of obsolete Kidde, Fyrnetics, Firex, and Edwards ionization smoke detectors, and with similarly branded combination carbon monoxide / ionization smoke detectors. Our criteria for acceptance are as follows:

1. Kidde's consumer disposal program is designed to assist the individual consumer with proper disposal of their ionization smoke detector. Kidde cannot accept obsolete Kidde/Firex/Fyrnetics/Edwards ionization detectors for disposal from business entities. [***Please confirm your status.***]
2. The detectors must be branded Kidde (with N.C. address), Firex, Fyrnetics or Edwards. We cannot accept detectors manufactured by other companies, including those manufactured by other U.S. based Kidde companies. [***Please provide the brand name.***]
3. The radioactive particle Americium 241 (Am241) must be less than or equal to 1.0 micro curies. [***Please provide this information which can be found on the back of the alarm.***]
4. The detector must be a model that we manufactured. The model number is shown on the back label. [***Please provide the model number and quantity of each model you wish to return.***]
5. The detector must be intact. It cannot be broken apart. [***Please confirm the status.***]
6. Batteries should be removed from the detector prior to shipment. [***Please note: battery removal is not always possible for the 10-year sealed products.***]
7. **Your full contact information must be provided as an email address is insufficient for tracking obsolete ionization smoke detectors.**

Please provide the information requested in 1-7 above and confirm whether your obsolete alarm(s) meet the criteria. If you are in doubt, please provide pictures of the front and back of the obsolete detector(s).

If all criteria are met, you will be provided a Return Authorization Number and the address to which your detectors should be sent. Note: Kidde pays for the disposal of our ionization smoke detectors, and therefore does not provide pre-paid mailing labels or packaging to the end-user.

Thank you!

Please email your responses to:

Product Support
Kidde Fire Safety / UTC Climate, Controls & Security
Email: gpccsproductsupport2@kiddeus.com

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