



MEDIA RELEASE

Emergency Management Department

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Red Cross Smoke Alarm Installations Ongoing

Oct. 3, 2017 – Even with the American Red Cross currently focused on providing relief to victims of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria, local smoke alarm installations are still going strong. Since this summer, Lake County has partnered with the Red Cross to install free smoke alarms in residences in the Two Harbors, Silver Bay and Finland areas.

Fewer than half of MN homes have working smoke alarms. Because victims of home fires often have less than two minutes to escape, smoke alarms can make a life-saving difference. The Red Cross is working to reduce deaths and injuries from home fires by 25% by 2020. You can learn more at <http://www.redcross.org/local/minnesota/home-fire-safety>.

“The Red Cross provides the free smoke alarms,” according to BJ Kohlstedt, Lake County Emergency Manager, “and local groups volunteer to install them at no cost. In Two Harbors, contact Tim Fischer, Two Harbors Federal Credit Union, at 834-2266 to install them, or if you want to install them yourself, you can request them from the Two Harbors Fire Department. In the Silver Bay area, call 226-4444, and the Silver Bay Fire Department or Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) will install them for you.”

Outside these areas, you can contact the Red Cross directly to request smoke alarm installations. Call **612-460-3674** with your name, address and phone, or text “alarm” to 844-811-0100.

Many people think that if they test their smoke alarm monthly and it beeps, it’s still good. But that only tests the battery, not the smoke sensor which needs to be replaced every ten years. Red Cross alarms have ten year batteries that never need replacing. Red Cross smoke alarms have already saved lives in northern Minnesota; isn’t it time you updated yours? It’s only a phone call away.

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Contacts: BJ Kohlstedt, Director, Lake County Emergency Manager, 218-220-7811 or bj.kohlstedt@co.lake.mn.us.

In the Two Harbors area, contact Tim Fisher, Two Harbors Federal Credit Union, 218-834-2266 or tfischer@thfcu.org.