

Greenfield Township
Volunteer Fire Company
Fire/EMS Station 24

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Greenfield Township, PA 16407

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***Greenfield Township
Volunteer Fire Company
(GTVFC)***

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Smoke Alarms-How, Where & Why

By A. F. Karolyi—Administrative Member

Of the many types of smoke alarm systems; **Audible, Visual/Audible and Visual/Tactile**, are three types in use. They are the most important safety devices to insure against fire fatalities in your home. Responding to an alarm with a practiced family evacuation plan will save your lives!

How do the alarms work All smoke alarms have one of two technologies, photoelectric and ionization. All alarms have a beam generator and sensor. Photoelectric alarms fall into two categories, beam and light scattering. Each photoelectric type has a light source which creates a light beam, a lens system and a photosensitive cell. When sufficient smoke crosses the light beam causing either the light intensity to decrease or to scatter the light as a result of reflection off the smoke particles, the alarm goes off. The ionization alarms work in the same way, except the beam in an ionization type alarm is created by a small radiation source that produces electrically charged air molecules. Smoke entering the alarm attaches to the beam air molecules, reducing the current flow to the sensor, setting off the alarm. Of the two, the ionization type is more sensitive to detecting the lesser amount of smoke from a flaming fire. All alarms can be battery powered or wired into house current and can have battery backup. The smoke alarms discussed in this article are primarily for home use. There are other types of alarm systems that are designed for commercial and public buildings depending upon occupant needs.

What are the differences between the alarm types?

Audible Alarms – These are most commonly used and when activated emit a loud piercing, high pitched electronic horn sound.

Visual/Audible Alarms – In addition to the horn sound, this type will also activate a high intensity strobe light of approximately 177 candelas 60 times a minute. This type of smoke alarm is designed for hearing impaired people and is most practical in open areas during waking hours. They are not designed to wake people up although it's possible depending upon alarm location and the individual.

Visual/Tactile Alarms – This type, also for the hearing impaired, has the strobe light feature and a bed vibrator as well. The vibrator is placed under the mattress and a choice of either visual or vibrator is the usual setup, although systems can be purchased with both options activating together. The vibrator insures waking an individual.

Which type to choose and how many depends upon individual family requirements. The **Audible** is sufficient for most families. For families including hearing impaired persons, the com-

bination of **Visual/Audible** and **Visual/Tactile** are available depending on life style requirements. **Visual/Audible** for day-time living areas and **Visual/Tactile** in the bedrooms is recommended.

Smoke alarm placement locations. Place one alarm on every level of your home, on the ceiling or at eye level. For extra safety include locations both inside and outside of sleeping areas. Complete installation instructions are provided by the manufacturer. If **Visual/Audible** or **Visual/Tactile** systems are required, professional installation is recommended.

Maintenance. Keep the alarms and surrounding area clean; free of dust and debris. Battery powered alarms make a bird-like chirping noise if the battery is low and needs replacement. It's a good habit to change the battery every fall when day-light savings time ends assuring maximum alarm power for the winter season. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on Visual Audible/Tactile systems. Testing the alarms every month using the method provided by the manufacturer, usually a test button on the device, is recommended. Smoke alarms last about 5 to 10 years, after which they should be replaced.

Where can you get smoke alarms or alarm systems?

Smoke alarms are readily available in most hardware, home supply or general merchandise stores. Make sure that any alarm you purchase carries a nationally recognized testing laboratory label such as Underwriters Laboratories Inc.. Alarm systems are available at some professional security providers and through companies that can be found on the internet. If you need additional information, contact **GTVFC** on our non-emergency number, 570-282-4981.

Why should you install smoke alarms in your home?

Smoke alarms can not only save lives by providing early warning to your household, but possibly minimize damage to your home by enabling an earlier call to your local fire department. Some security companies also monitor for possible fire, placing a call to the fire department as the alarm alerts their monitors. Advise your insurance agent that you have installed smoke alarms for possible premium savings

Do you have smoke alarms in your house? Can you afford not to?

The 2006 GTVFC Fund Drive is on!

Please support your fire company.

Remember, your donation is IRS tax deductible !

Generic Drugs—Definition and Safety

By A.F. Karolyi—Administrative Member

GTVFC, by presenting this article, does not advocate the use of generic drugs over brand name drugs. Some brand name drugs do not have a generic equivalent. Only your doctor, knowing your medical history, can prescribe the proper drug for you whether it is generic or brand name. Your doctor can specify, on your prescription form, if he/she wants only the brand name supplied. Be aware, particularly if you mail your prescriptions to a medical plan supplier, that some plans as well as the states they are located in, specify that a generic drug be supplied if the doctor has not indicated “brand name only” on the prescription form. That being said, the author’s research from the FDA (U.S. Food & Drug Administration), and the internet offer the following information on generic drugs.

What is a generic drug? – A generic drug is the biological equivalent to a brand name drug in so far as the active ingredients contained in the medication. Federal law does not allow the inactive ingredients in a generic drug to be the same as its brand name equivalent; otherwise it would be a straight copy. A generic drug can be developed only when the equivalent brand name drug’s 20 year patent protection has expired. All brand name drugs are patented to protect the manufacturer’s formula, investment and marketing.

Are generic drugs safe? – All generic drugs must pass the same stringent federal (FDA) testing as brand name drugs. The generic has to be proven to effectively combat the illness or condition, dose for dose, as the brand name it replaces or the FDA will not issue approval to the manufacturer for production and sale. The generic must have the same active ingredients and must produce the same benefit in the body in the same amount of time as the brand name drug. The generics have the same risks as the brand name, but not any additional risks to the user. The appearance and inactive ingredients, such as colors and flavorings, look different because U.S. trademark laws prohibit a generic drug to look exactly the same as a brand name drug. After approval, the FDA periodically inspects the manufacturer’s facilities and checks drug quality to assure user safety.

How are generic drugs manufactured? – All generic drugs are manufactured in production facilities that must meet or exceed the FDA standards and follow FDA standards of good manufacturing practices. According to the FDA, approximately 50% of all generic drugs are produced by brand name manufacturers after their 20 year patents have expired.

How can you recognize generic drugs? – Unless you have pharmacological knowledge, the only way you will

know when you receive a generic drug is: when your doctor tells you the drug prescribed is generic; your pharmacist advises a generic drug is available for your prescription and you have a choice if your doctor has not specified “brand name only”; or your medical prescription plan automatically provides generic for name brand drugs as a matter of some states law or policy, in which case they will advise you when filling your prescription. Why are generic drugs difficult to recognize the first time you receive them? Mostly because they don’t look like the brand name, for reasons stated above, and they are identified by chemical name. Brand name manufacturer marketers spend a lot of time and money naming brand name drugs so the name sticks in your memory. Watch any TV show where a prescription drug is advertised and you will understand.

Why do generic drugs cost less? – The primary reasons are no development costs. You don’t see generic drugs advertised, on TV or elsewhere and once a generic is approved, there is greater competition as most of the time more than one company manufactures the bioequivalent generic of a brand name drug. More competition, the price comes down. As stated in the May 2006 issue of the AARP Bulletin, according to an FDA study “...that when two generic drugs are introduced in competition with a brand-name drug, prices are cut in half. When nine generics are competing, prices drop an average of 80 percent.”

Is generic drug availability improving? - Unfortunately, not as fast as could possibly be made to happen. Again quoting from the above mentioned AARP publication: “The FDA has 200 employees reviewing about 975 generic drug applications while 700 employees are reviewing about 150 new-drug applications”. The result, “..... it takes the FDA about twice as long – 16.5 months – to review a generic as it does a new brand-name drug.” Why?? Because the brand name manufacturers pay the FDA user fees!!

Summary – **Are generic drugs safe? YES! Are generic drugs less costly? YES! If you want to keep your prescription costs within reason should you ask your doctor if a generic is available and appropriate for your prescription? YES!**

If you have any doubts regarding generic drugs, talk to your doctor or you can get additional information from your pharmacist. This article has been reviewed by Dr. William Scott Wagner, Registered Pharmacist at the Endless Mountains Pharmacy in Clifford, PA.

Greenfield Twp. Recycling

By R. Britton—Twp. Recycling Coordinator

Greenfield Township began its recycling program in 1993. From the days of tossing recyclables over the wall into dump trucks behind the Community Center, many changes have taken place. The Center has progressed to a building containing an office as well as bins leading to a modern compartmentalized recycling trailer towed by a specialized truck. Recycling Coordinator Bob Britton notes most of the additional improvements to the Center have been implemented.

Participation has grown significantly over the years and the Center has received several awards for the quantity of material collected on a voluntary basis. Benefits to the environment are matched by the many thousands of dollars saved through recycling in Greenfield Township when compared to residents paying a per bag fee to landfill.

The Greenfield Township Recycling Center is open the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month from 9:00 to 11:30 AM. Although detailed information is available, the center accepts household recycling consisting of aluminum cans, food cans, pie tins, foil, glass bottles and jars. Only plastic bottles and jars are acceptable. Appropriate paper products consist of newspapers, magazines, phone books and catalogs in paper bags or tied with non-plastic string. The emphasis is on household recyclables. For example, gardening pots, mirrors, cups and light bulbs are not acceptable. Greenfield Township recently passed a resolution not to burn any items on the recycle list.

Since its inception, the Greenfield Township Recycling Program has provided a source for Community Service to the Lackawanna County Court as well as local Magistrates. In addition, a number of organizations have used the recycling program to fulfill service to the community requirements for their young members. Volunteers are available to direct recyclables to the appropriate bins or to help those who may need assistance in unloading their vehicles. Residents not familiar with the program are encouraged to visit the Center during hours of operation to receive detailed information and pick up a new recycling container.

As the program is operated mainly through the efforts of volunteers, anyone who may have one or two Saturday mornings available each month are urged to **contact Bob Britton at 570-222-3258** or visit the center. A flexible schedule can be arranged.

<p><u>Recruitment—New Members Required</u> <u>(5) Administrative & Fund Raising; (5) Drivers, Fire and Ambulance Equipment; (5) Interior Firefighters.</u></p>
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Make Democracy Work!

By A. F. Karolyi—Administrative Member

What is Democracy? Webster’s Dictionary defines Democracy as: “A government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections.”

The key point: Our government is based upon people voting for elected representatives. The format of a House of Representatives and Senate is the same at state and national levels, with representatives chosen by the people in free elections. Elected representatives are, by definition, the delegates of the people and as such should express the opinions of their constituents. Without elections we don’t have a Democracy.

Without voters we don’t have elections.

Why should you vote, in local, state and national elections? Voting assures you exercise the power given to you by our founding fathers. Many of our parents and grandparents came from countries where voting privileges did not exist. You have the power to elect your government.

Lackawanna County has approximately 154,000 registered voters (County Lines 2005 magazine). Approximately 65,000 voted in the 2005 elections (Lackawanna County Bureau of Elections). Less than half, 42 percent of the registered voters elected your representation. What happened to the others?

What’s that you say? Your vote doesn’t count? How do you know! We would never be able to elect representatives of the people if everyone thought that way. You don’t like your party’s candidate for office? In a Democracy, you can vote for whomever you feel is the better person for the job. What’s that you say? You’re not registered, you don’t have the time, or you don’t have transportation to the polls. Call the Lackawanna County Bureau of Elections, Office of Voter Registration, at (570) 963-6737 and request a Pennsylvania voter guide, an application to register, or an absentee ballot if you will be out of town on Election Day, or an illness or physical disability prevents you from voting in person at the polls. It is important to encourage your 18 year olds or those who will be 18 by Election Day, to register and vote as well.

While researching voting issues on line, I found a quote worth repeating from Andrew Lack, Chairman and CEO of Sony Music Entertainment: “Bad officials are elected by good citizens who do not vote.”

Make Democracy Work! Register! Vote!

It’s your Township, Town, City, State, and Country!

<p><u>Fire Hall Breakfasts—Last Sunday of every month.</u></p>
