

# Ready PA *monthly*

✓ Be informed. ✓ Be prepared. ✓ Be involved.

A Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) digital newsletter

Ready PA Monthly - October 2024



## Cybersecurity Awareness Month

*Four Simple Steps to Stay Safe Online*

Technology is everywhere in our lives, from smartphones to smart homes. While it makes life easier, it also creates new risks from online criminals. This Cybersecurity Awareness Month, we want to help you stay safe online with some simple tips.

The theme this year is Secure Our World, and here are four easy steps to protect yourself and your family online:

1. **Use a Password Manager**  
A password manager creates and stores strong passwords for you. It's a safe and easy way to keep your accounts secure.
2. **Turn on Multifactor Authentication (MFA)**  
MFA adds an extra layer of protection by asking for a second form of identification. Turn it on for your personal and work accounts.
3. **Watch Out for Phishing**  
Phishing is when cybercriminals try to trick you into giving personal information through fake emails or messages. Learn to spot these and report them.
4. **Keep Your Devices Updated**  
Regular updates fix security issues on your devices. Turn on automatic updates so you're always protected.

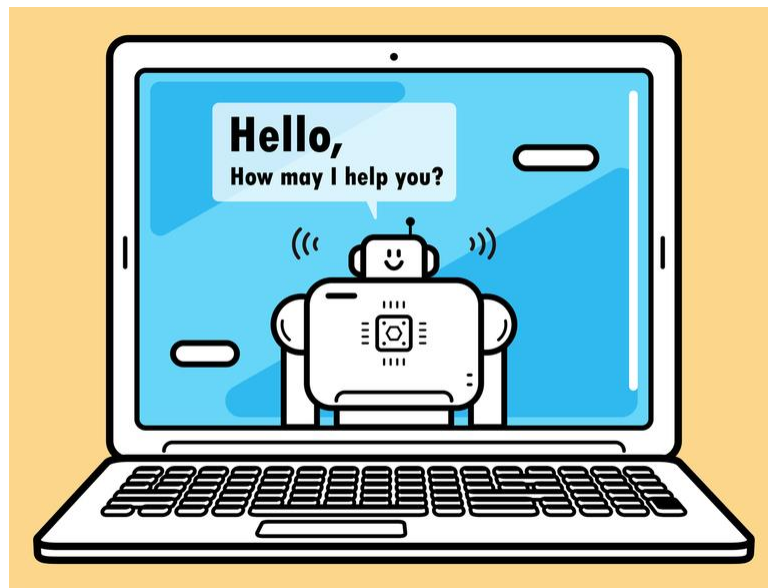
Cybersecurity Awareness Month helps everyone learn how to stay safe online. Start using these tips today to protect yourself and your loved ones!

## Staying Safe Using AI

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming a big part of our lives, helping with everything from virtual assistants to online shopping. While AI can make things easier, it's important to stay safe and protect your personal information when using it. Always be cautious about

what data you share with AI-powered tools and apps. Double-check privacy settings, and only use trusted platforms to keep your information secure.

Another key way to stay safe with AI is to be aware of scams. Cybercriminals can use AI to create fake messages, emails, or even voices that seem real. Learn to recognize these tricks and avoid sharing personal details unless you're sure it's safe. By staying informed and cautious, you can enjoy the benefits of AI while keeping your personal information protected.



# Fire Prevention Week

National Fire Prevention Week runs through October 12.

This year's theme, "Smoke alarms: Make them work for you!"

focuses on the importance of having functioning smoke alarms in the home.

Smoke alarms play a critical role in saving lives, reducing the risk of death in a house fire by more than half. Sadly, three out of five home fire deaths happen in homes without working alarms. Ensuring your home is equipped with functioning smoke alarms can provide the crucial early warning you need—giving you only about two minutes to escape safely in the event of a fire.

To keep your home and family safe, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends three key steps:

1. Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of your home, including the basement.
2. Test your smoke alarms at least once a month and change the batteries twice a year.
3. Replace smoke alarms when they are 10 years old or if they stop responding to tests.

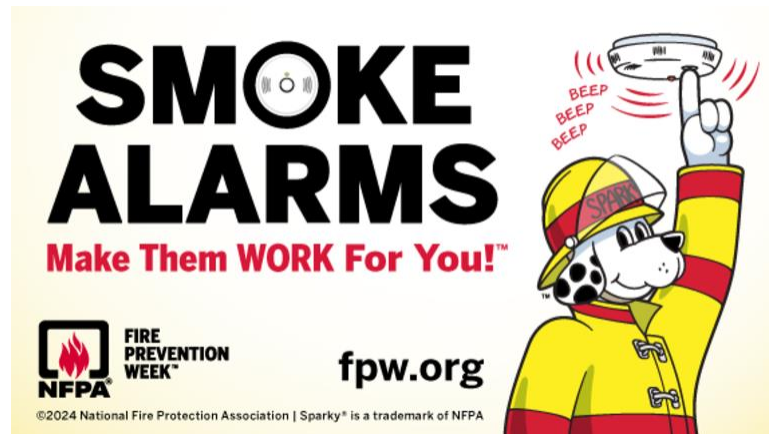
Having a home escape plan is just as important. A good plan should include two ways out of every room, like a door and a window, and a safe meeting spot outside. Practice your plan at least twice a year, and make sure everyone in your household, including children, knows what to do.

If you have family members with sensory or physical needs, consider using smoke alarms with special features like lights, vibrations, or voice alerts. It's also a good idea to install alarms for other hazards, such as carbon monoxide or gas leaks.

Additional Fire Safety Tips:

- Create a home evacuation map with two exits from every room.
- Practice fire drills twice a year, including during the day and at night.
- Make sure your home's number is visible for emergency responders.
- Close doors behind you as you exit to slow the spread of fire.
- Once outside, stay outside—never reenter a burning building.

For more information, or to receive free smoke alarms and safety checks, contact your local fire department. You can also visit the Office of the State Fire Commissioner's [website](#) for



additional fire safety tips. By taking these precautions, you can help protect your home and loved ones from the dangers of fire.

## Get Ready to Vote!

Pennsylvania's election is Nov. 5, 2024.

If you are eligible, now is the time to [register to vote](#) or [check your registration status](#) to make sure your information is current.

You must register or update your information by Monday, Oct. 21 to be eligible to vote in this election.

If you are already registered and want to vote by mail, be sure to [apply for your mail ballot](#) by Oct. 29.

For the most up-to-date Pennsylvania voting information, visit [vote.pa.gov](https://vote.pa.gov) or follow the Department of State on [Facebook](#) and [X](#).

### 2024 General Election Important Dates

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Oct. <b>21</b>	Last day to register to vote in the election. <a href="https://vote.pa.gov/Register">vote.pa.gov/Register</a>
Oct. <b>29</b>	Last day to apply for a mail ballot. <a href="https://vote.pa.gov/MailBallot">vote.pa.gov/MailBallot</a>
Nov. <b>5</b>	Election Day. Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. <a href="https://vote.pa.gov/Polls">vote.pa.gov/Polls</a>
Nov. <b>5</b>	Completed mail ballots must be received by 8 p.m. <a href="https://vote.pa.gov/County">vote.pa.gov/County</a>

 **Get ready to vote**  
[vote.pa.gov](https://vote.pa.gov)

[OCTOBER TIP SHEET: CYBERSECURITY FOR OLDER ADULTS](#)

[OCTOBER TIP SHEET: CYBER SAFETY FOR KIDS](#)

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