

BEDFORD COUNTY FIRE & RESCUE

# NEWSLETTER



## BCoFR Family

We are excited to introduce our new Bedford County Fire & Rescue newsletter, designed to keep you informed and engaged with everything happening in our organization.

In this newsletter, you will find:

**Important Updates:** Stay-up-to-date with the latest news, projects, and initiatives that impact our work.

**Employee Spotlight:** Celebrate our colleagues achievements and learn more about the talented individuals in our team.

**Upcoming Events:** We'll provide details on meetings, training sessions and social gatherings.

**Resources and Tips:** Discover helpful tools and strategies to enhance your work experience and professional growth.

We believe that staying informed is key to our success, and this newsletter will be a go-to source for all the information you need.

Thank you for being a vital part of our organization!

**In the Community:** This past month Caleb Brown and Dakota Hall attended the Adaptive Soccer Banquet with Bedford County Parks and Rec. Caleb and Dakota showed off their ambulance not only the kids, but also to the staff as well. Ice cream was enjoyed by all. Everyone had a wonderful time!



**Adaptive Soccer Banquet**

# COMMAND CORNER



Dear Fire & EMS Family,

I want to take a moment to recognize the incredible dedication and tireless efforts each of you put in every day, whether you are a volunteer or a career staff member. You are the backbone of our community, standing ready at all hours to protect and serve. Your commitment to excellence, teamwork, and service does not go unnoticed. In the face of challenges whether they are long shifts, difficult calls, or the demands of balancing personal lives, we see your resilience. We also understand that these challenges can take a toll. It's important for you to know that the strength of our department is not only measured by the work we do in the field but by the way we support one another through thick and thin. Morale is built not just by the tasks we complete but by the community we create among ourselves.

As we move forward, I encourage each of you to lean on one another, communicate openly, and recognize that we are all here for the same mission: to keep our community safe. And speaking of our community, they are with us, too. Every day, the people we serve show their support, whether it's a kind word, a thank you, or a helping hand. We are fortunate to have a community that stands behind us, and that is a testament to the trust you've built through your professionalism, compassion, and courage.

In the coming weeks we will be fully engaged and working collaboratively in the initial phases of the Fire & EMS study, our team is fully committed to being actively engaged every step of the way. This process will help us identify best practices and develop improved processes to strengthen our services. The goal is to ensure that we continue to meet the evolving needs of our community and citizens—not just for today, but for many years to come.

This is a critical opportunity to assess where we are and how we can elevate our capabilities to deliver even higher levels of service and care. We look forward to working together to build a stronger, more efficient Fire & EMS system that will support our community's safety and well-being well into the future.

Let's continue to support one another, knowing that we have each other and the community standing by our side. Your work is invaluable, and I am immensely proud of all that you do. Together, we make a difference.

Thank you for your service and dedication.

Stay safe and stay strong,

Sincerely,  
Chief Blankenship

# Deputy Chief Altman: Administration

## ● CAD

The new CAD has been live since May, and many are aware there have been some growing pains. The Fire & Rescue staff along with the 911 Communications Center is continually meeting and making “tweaks” to the system to make it work more efficiently. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions for changes, please reach out to Deputy Chief Altman, and he will relay them to the CAD committee.

## ● MDT's for CAD mobile

The career medic units are in the process of having cradlepoint routers and hardware mounting systems installed for the new tablets. This should be complete by the end of September, and we will begin distributing the tablets out for use by all personnel. Several volunteer fire departments and rescue squads have the iPads with CAD mobile maps and routing and also see each other and where they are at all times.

## Controlled Substance Registry



BCoFR has applied for the **Controlled Substance Registry (CSR)** license that will allow the pharmacy to be located at the administrative offices. The license will be issued by the end of September, and we will then get our DEA license to carry and distribute all medications for the system.

We are ordering new medication safes, electronic locks for all drug box compartments along with several other technology upgrades that will be coming to make the transfer and tracking of medications more automated and efficient for all personnel. Training on the entire CSR process will be offered in multiple formats once the system is finalized.

This program is one of the biggest changes to come to EMS in a long time. It will require a large amount of man hours to manage and will need cooperation from everybody to make it happen. Updates will be coming more frequently to all EMS agency leaderships. Please share with all of your members.



## ● Marcus Alert Responses

The Marcus Alert Program is a state-mandated program to help mental health patients get the appropriate help and resources to deal with their issues with more mental health training for first responders, most notably law enforcement with special response teams consisting of mental health workers. The premise is to transfer lower-level mental health issues to a mental health call center (988) for phone referrals and help and not have law enforcement and/or EMS respond, which can elevate or inflame a situation that may not need those resources.

Long story short, our calls were increasing due to Marcus Alert responses that did not have any medical issue or injury to it being a 2nd party caller which cannot be transferred to the 988 call center. The team consisting of law enforcement, Fire-EMS and the 911 Director agreed upon some new procedures to help reduce the EMS response to the lower-level Marcus alerts. This will be reevaluated periodically to make sure it is helping.



# FIRE MARSHAL OFFICE: FM GEORGE



## Fire Prevention Week

Fire Prevention Week is celebrated every October and is the oldest public health observance in the United States. For over 100 years, Fire Prevention Week has educated people of the risk of home fires and ways to minimize them. Our schools, community organizations and local fire departments play a key role in sharing the Fire Prevention Week message and critical fire safety messages in their community every year, This year Fire Prevention Week is October 6th - 12th and the theme is "Smoke alarms: Make them work for you!"

Our fire prevention division will be sharing a fire safety video on our social media and webpage. This video will also be shared with Bedford County Public Schools and shown to all K-5th graders within Bedford County. All videos and handouts that are posted are available for your use as well. Any time that you conduct fire prevention or fire prevention education please let our office know by email so we can document that! As a reminder we still have smoke detectors available if your department needs them.

### Welcome our new Assistant Fire Marshal



## Steven Whipple

After an extensive process, a conditional offer was made and accepted by Steven Whipple for the Assistant Fire Marshal position.

Steven is coming to us from the Newport News Fire Department and will join us in the mid-October timeframe.

We look forward to having Steven join our team and will be making our rounds and introductions the latter part of the year.



Aside from Fire Prevention Week, we are also preparing for community risk reduction and fire safety education throughout the end of the year. You will see many things shared on social media and through our webpage promoting community risk reduction and fire safety. These items include Halloween safety, cooking safety, Christmas/tree safety, and many more items. It is important to know that if you are looking for any community risk reduction items that you can share with your community; we probably have something for you.

Please feel free to reach out and let the Fire Marshal's office help you!

# Deputy Chief Johnston: Operations

## Swiftwater Rescue Team Special Operations



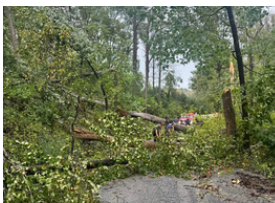
Special Operations Command was activated on September 27, 2024 due to Hurricane Helene. Our team responded to Southwest Virginia where rising floodwaters were taking over communities and resources were needed quickly to rescue individuals from their homes.

Team members had evacuated 33 civilians and 17 pets from flooded homes utilizing our boats. These rescues happened in multiple locations: Atkins, Marion, and Chilhowie.

We commend the team for their swift action and the positive impact they made during this critical response. Their bravery and readiness to serve are an inspiration to us all.

## Tornado in Bedford

The National Weather Service confirmed that an EF1 tornado touched down in Bedford County, Virginia at 4:19 pm on Saturday, September 28, 2024. Command 1 (Bedford Fire Department) established command and started working with Bedford Electric, Bedford County Fire & Rescue, and Bedford County Sheriff's Office. 40-50 large trees were cut and roadways cleared by BFD members, along with help from the neighbors in the area, to make access to the homeowners trapped on the roadways. Bedford County Sheriff's Office launched a drone and a perimeter of damage was established. All homeowners stated damage to property and agriculture but no injuries. A fantastic effort was given by all everyone who responded and worked together in a unified command system.



**We would like to recognize and give appreciation to all of our local first responders. They often work under extreme pressure, facing unpredictable situations to provide immediate assistance and care.**

**We would also like to show our gratitude for everything these men and women have done and are doing everyday.**

# Captain McChesney & Captain Wilkerson

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## Captain McChesney

BCoFR is thrilled that the **latest EMT class is underway**, welcoming a diverse group of students eager to embark on a rewarding career in emergency services. The class, which started Aug. 6 and will finish Nov. 26, consists of rigorous training designed to equip our students with essential skills in patient care, emergency response, and life saving techniques. We currently have 11 EMT students, all of whom became CPR certified their first night.

*CE hours for EMS class, 6pm-10pm at the BCoFR EMS classroom.*

- Oct 1: Cardiology & Resuscitation
- Oct. 8: Altered Mental Status
- Oct 15: Med Emergencies
- Oct 22: Trauma 1
- Oct 29: Trauma 2
- Nov 5: Trauma 3
- Nov 12: Special Populations/Neonatal, OB, and Geriatrics
- Nov 19: Operations

## Captain Wilkerson



In response to the growing need for skilled personnel, our organization is proud to announce the formation of a new **Recruitment & Retention Committee**. This initiative aims to enhance our efforts in attracting and retaining top talent while fostering a supportive and engaging work environment, as well as addressing the unique challenges faced by rural combination; where both paid staff & volunteers play a crucial role in serving our community.

This committee is comprised of career staff, volunteer rescue personnel, and volunteer fire personnel. The Recruitment and Retention Committee will be meeting regularly to assess current practices, gather feedback, and develop actionable plans. We encourage all personnel to share their ideas and experiences, as your input is invaluable in shaping our recruitment and retention strategies.

By establishing this committee, we are reaffirming our commitment to building a strong and dedicated workforce.



# IN THE SPOTLIGHT



BREMS awarded Capt. Katie Wilkerson for Outstanding EMS Prehospital Provider. CONGRATULATIONS! We are all proud of you Capt. Wilkerson.



## Stroke Team Recognition

We are proud to highlight four of our dedicated providers who were recently recognized by the Centra Stroke Team for their outstanding actions while on duty. Pictured is Amy Richardson & Trey Postles (Left) and Lydia Wilson & Jason Morgan (Right). Their quick thinking and exemplary performance during a critical incident exemplifies the dedication and professionalism that our organization strives to uphold. They received hand written notes and given stroke awareness/brain pins.



We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to all the agencies that collaborated with us to ensure a safe and successful weekend at the County Fair.

## County Fair Appreciation



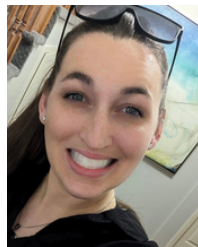
Special thanks to all the Bike Team members, Montvale Rescue Sq., Chamblissburg Rescue Sq., Hardy Rescue Sq., Big Island Emergency Crew, and those in the medical tent.



Trey Postles and Kayla Snow passed their AEMT exam this past month. Congratulations Trey & Kayla! We are proud of all your hard work and determination.



Giving a BIG shout out to Theresa Boyes and Dakota Hall for passing their Firefighter-1 class. Great job you two!



Cortney Sharp-Cline & Taylor Gentry as you all know achieved their paramedic certifications. We cannot express how proud we all are of these two ladies!



Welcome Katelyn Croft to the BCoFR family! She is EMS only and currently in medical school. We are very excited to have you with us Katie!

# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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## Community Care

**On the following pages, we are proud to share the positive feedback/stories we have received recently from citizens, lieutenants, and colleagues, showcasing the profound impact of our collective efforts.**

**These testimonies serve as a powerful reminder of the positive difference you all make in the community and reinforce our commitment to serving with integrity and compassion.**

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**7-28-2024:** Mark Carter & Keagan Tuck responded to a patient's residence for back pain. They arrived to find the patient lying in bed with labored breathing. Originally the patient had no intention of going to the hospital, but the providers saw that the patient's RR was increased. Mark and Keagan stayed on scene for an extended time persuading the patient that he needed medical attention, after conversing with the patient and the patient's family, the patient finally agreed to be transported.

During transport the patient suddenly stated that he can't breathe, reassessment showed that O2 had decreased, RR increased and the left chest was not moving. Mark Carter performed a needle decompression, and the patient reported that he felt a tremendous relief.

Props to Mark and Keagan for their efforts to persuade the patient to be transported and for Mark's quick action with the life-threatening injury. The patient's outcome greatly benefited from his quick treatment and patient assessment.

**8-21-24:** FM 14-8, Squad 8 and County 10 were dispatched to a CPR in progress; Squad 7 was added as well for extra assistance. Upon 14-8 arrival the patient was found on the floor with the husband doing good CPR. Our crew took over care with the LUCAS on compressions, ACLS was initiated after pads were placed from the cardiac monitor, an IO established, A NPA was placed, ventilations started via BVM via supplemental O2, and 1mg of Epi was administered.

PM Josh Smith recognized a ventricular fibrillation rhythm and delivered a defibrillation at 200 joules. The patient began having sinus rhythm, had a pulse, and started breathing on her own but inadequately. County 10 then took over airway as EMT Myers, who was on the airway, began to remove equipment and formulating a plan to move the patient. Over the course of roughly 5 minutes the patient was breathing on her own adequately and BVM ventilations were ceased and the patient was placed on a NRB mask.

Patient was moved to the ambulance and readied for transport. Throughout the transport, the patient's condition improved. Josh Smith and Robert Myers did a great job with prompt response and quick action on scene. We would also like to send kudos out to the husband who did CPR for a good amount of time prior to the crew's arrival

**9-6-24:** A phone call was received from a patient that Theresa Boyes and Garrett Pavich provided care to her father. She wanted to point out their professionalism and their attention to detail, she also wanted to note that they were very caring and thorough with their assessment of her father who had suffered a fall. Even though the patient did not want transport, they provided that option as well as other alternatives.



# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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## Community Care

**8-5-24:** The wife of a patient that was treated by Jason Morgan & Lydia Wilson sent us a heartfelt thank you card. In her message, she expressed her gratitude, stating “You are all to be commended for your professionalism and grace. My husband is blessed to have you...all of you!” This gesture is a testament to the exceptional care and dedication each of you brings to work every day. Please know that your efforts are valued, not only by our patients but by our patients families. Thank you for your hard work & commitment.

**7-25-24:** Providers Jack Arrington & Matt Trevilian were dispatched to a patient having chest pain, upon arrival the patient stated that she was having stabbing pain in her chest. Our providers did a 12 lead, which indicated a STEMI. The patient wanted to be transported to BMH, however our providers were able to persuade her to go to RMH. During transport the patient’s condition started to worsen, Trevilian quickly requested County 10 & 14-8 to assist. Arrington & Trevilian stopped at Co. 13 to assist with patient care, during this time the patient went into cardiac arrest. CPR was initiated immediately and defibrillation pads applied. 14-8 (William Kirby/ Erik Smith) along with County 10 (Lt. Byrd), they all assisted in giving life saving interventions. The patient was defibrillated eight times between BLS & ALS care, the LUCAS device effectively perfused the brain allowing some spontaneous breathing. By the time of arrival at RMH, the patient was able to communicate that she was in pain.

We wanted to highlight the outstanding performance of 14-13 (Arrington & Trevilian), County 10 (Lt. Byrd), as well as 14-8 (Kirby & Smith). Their swift and effective actions played a crucial role in saving this patient’s life.

**9-6-24:** Cortney Sharp-Cline working on 14-1, was on the way to a stroke call when 14-6 was dispatched to a CPR in progress was called out over the radio. Cortney chose to divert to the CPR call after speaking with 14-6. Cortney, along with Dakota Hall arrived and started life saving interventions on the patient. Cortney had established an IO, had pads placed on patient, had the LUCAS in place & working; she also directed help on scene to assist with ventilating the patient and started ACLS. Cortney also, intubated the patient on her first attempt and was able to improve that aspect. Cortney was very calm, cool and collected, directing her needs and requests. Cortney was the only ALS provider on the call and she did amazing!

# AGENCY NEWS

Company 8 is thrilled to announce two very exciting initiatives this month: a valuable training opportunity for everyone “**Mayday Technician - Rapid Intervention Company Operations**” and the launch of our **3rd Annual Vendor & Car Show**.

On **October 5th & 6th**, we will host a specialized training session “MAYDAY” designed to enhance skills and knowledge. If you are interested, please sign up with **Virginia Department of Fire Programs**.

Moneta Fire Department is also excited to announce their 3rd Annual Vendor & Car Show Event, taking place on October 26th from 10a-3p @ Moneta Fire House (12737 North Old Moneta Rd., Moneta, VA 24121)

## Company 8 Moneta Volunteer Fire Department

## Shady Grove Fire & Rescue

Shady Grove Fire & Rescue is excited to announce a series of upcoming fundraising events aimed at supporting their organization. These events provide a fantastic opportunity for our community to come together, have fun, and contribute to meaningful initiatives.

**October 20th:** BBQ Dinner from 12p-3p

**Tuesday, November 5th:** All Day Concessions

**Sunday, November 24th:** Turkey Dinner 12p-3p

This year marks a significant milestone for Big Island Emergency Crew, we proudly celebrated 60 years of dedicated service to our community. To honor this special anniversary we held a celebration where our volunteers and members of our community came together for a day of fun, camaraderie and reflection on all the years that we've been serving. It was a memorable experience.

Squad 2 is also excited to announce that our Annual Leaf Day Fundraiser is coming up on October 20 from 7am-5pm.

## Squad 2 Big Island Emergency Crew

## Boonsboro Fire & Rescue

This past month, our Boonsboro Fire & Rescue made significant strides in professional development and community engagement by attending a comprehensive training session and hosting a successful blood drive. Four members of Company 3 participated in a four day training session, where they trained in various disciplines under Heavy Technical Rescue (HTR) umbrella. This commitment to ongoing education underscores our providers dedication to excellence and professional growth.

Last month, Company 13 proudly hosted a delightful Pancake Breakfast that brought together community members for a morning of fun, food, and fellowship. Held on September 14th, the event was a resounding success, attracting families and friends eager to enjoy delicious pancakes while supporting a great cause.

## Company 13 Stewartville/ Chamblissburg Fire Dept

\*\* If any agency has news, fundraisers, etc. to share, please email [kseamster@bedfordcountyva.gov](mailto:kseamster@bedfordcountyva.gov) and let her know.

# UPCOMING EVENTS & IMPORTANT DATES

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## **Rescue Captain's Meeting**

**October 9 @ 7pm**

The upcoming meeting between command staff and rescue captains will focus on enhancing the organizational structure and operational efficiency within emergency services. An emphasis on strategic planning, resource management, and inter-departmental collaboration, the discussion is aimed to align goals and streamline operations.

## **Fire Commission Meeting**

**October 15 @ 7pm**

The upcoming meeting between command staff and fire chiefs will focus on enhancing the organizational structure and operational efficiency within the fire service. With an emphasis on strategic planning, resource management, and inter-departmental collaboration, the discussion is aimed to align goals and streamline operations.

## **2nd Annual Forest Fire Dept. Softball Tournament**

**October 12th - 13th**

Forest Fire Department is gearing up for its much anticipated Annual Softball Tournament, set to take place on October 12th at Lynchburg City Stadium. This event promises to be a day filled with friendly competition, camaraderie, and community spirit.



# FYI & TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES



Continuing education is necessary for one to keep up with the vastly changing field of emergency medical services. You are able to get free CE hours by going to the Office of EMS website and any training that is EMS based counts as CE hours.

CE hours for EMS class, 6pm-10pm at the BCoFR EMS classroom.

Oct 1st: Cardiology & Resuscitation

Oct. 8: Altered Mental Status

Oct 15: Med Emergencies

Oct 22: Trauma 1

Oct 29: Trauma 2

Nov 5th: Trauma 3

Nov 12: Special Pops/Neonatal, OB, geriatrics

Nov 19: Operations



If not already responding, please request the Fire Marshal's Office on-call investigator any time you respond to an incident involving the items listed below:

1. Fire (burning or out, new or old, any attempts or threats to burn)
2. Bombing/Firebombing/Explosion (Any explosive, explosion, Molotov cocktail, any attempts or threats)
3. Burns (any burn (fire, steam, or explosion)
4. Possession of or manufacture of (explosive devices, substances, or fire bobs)
5. Hazardous Materials (This could be a spill or storage of Haz-Mat.

\*\*Call Haz-Mat for remediation. FMO for Enforcement

These incidents must be investigated in compliance with the Code of Virginia. Dispatch is working hard to make sure that we are notified on each of these items, but please let us know if we were missed

## Save the Dates

### October 22, 2024: Tracheostomy Care and Emergencies

This hands on workshop will be presented by Sean Regan at the BREMS Office (2412 Langhorne Rd., Lynchburg, VA 24501) from 6pm to 8pm. Stay tuned for more details!

### November 19, 2024: The Agitated Patient

Sam Bryant will be presenting case studies for discussion at the BREMS Office (2412 Langhorne Rd., Lynchburg, VA 24501) from 6:00pm to 8:00pm.

IMPACT  
FIRST RESPONDERS

REGISTER HERE



BREMS  
The Blue Emergency  
Medical Services Council

Impact Living Services Presents

## Tactical Resiliency Workshop

with Kristen Sharrett, LPC-S

Thursday,  
October 3, 2024  
6pm-8pm

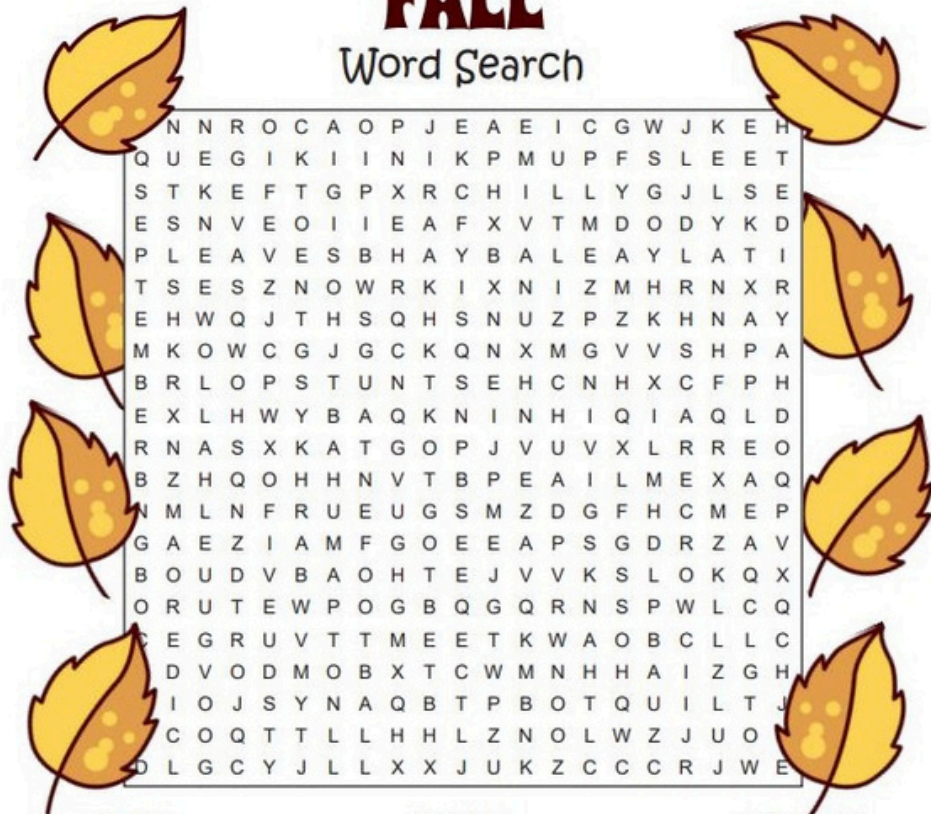
Campbell County Public Safety,  
Station 6  
238 Village Highway  
Rustburg, VA 24588

Includes material on how to develop a personal strategy of resiliency: the science of trauma and the power of resetting yourself back to a state of mental strength. All tactics are based on research and backed by individual and interpersonal practice. The workshop is helpful for any first responder as well as their loved ones.

**2.0 hours - Operations**  
**BLS - Area 15, ALS - Area 20**

# FALL

## Word Search



- ACORN
- HARVEST
- SCARECROW
- APPLE
- HAY BALE
- SEPTEMBER
- AUTUMN
- HAYRIDE
- SLEET
- CHESTNUTS
- LEAVES
- THANKSGIVING
- CHILLY
- MAIZE
- CIDER
- NOVEMBER
- COBWEB
- NUTS
- FALL
- OCTOBER
- FOOTBALL
- PUMPKIN
- GOURD
- QUILT
- HALLOWEEN
- RAKE

# SMOKE ALARMS

**Make Them WORK For You!™**





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