

FAQ

1. How do smoke detectors work?

Generally, devices from different manufacturers work according to the same or similar methods. Smoke detectors have a measuring chamber, where a light source is switched on at certain intervals. If smoke particles enter the measuring chamber, the scattered light that is created activates a photocell. This triggers an alarm that gives a warning with a loud signal.

2. Does the smoke detector alert the fire department automatically when the alarm is activated?

No! Smoke detectors help to detect fires early and warn residents, and give them time to flee and alarm the fire department. However, smoke detectors can neither extinguish fires nor prevent them.

3. How can I check if a smoke detector works?

When you press the test button (see operating instructions), the smoke detector is tested internally. If you cannot hear a confirmation tone, please immediately contact the degewo service hotline at 030 26485-2020.

4. What can I do to ensure that the smoke detector remains in a working condition?

Avoid hazardous environmental impacts (such as pollen, insect infestation). The smoke detectors should be temporarily covered or removed if any work is performed near the smoke detector that may trigger false alarms (for removal: please store smoke detector in a safe and protected location, e.g. in a standard freezer zip lock bag).

After completion of the work, the smoke detector must be reinstalled in the same location and its functionality has to be restored and checked (see operating instructions).

5. Can the smoke detector also be triggered through other influences (such as cooking)? What should I do in this situation?

Yes! An alarm can be triggered for safety reasons by strong water, cooking, frying, baking or grilling vapours. This is frequently the cause of false alarms. Open your windows and ventilate your room.

As soon as the potential cause is removed through ventilation, the smoke detector will revert to its normal operation.

Construction dust, spray created by paint jobs, insect and room fragrance sprays, etc. that enter directly into the smoke detector could also trigger an alarm and even destroy the device.

6. Is there an alternative if I cannot or do not want to carry out the repairs myself?

Yes. If you cannot or do not want to carry out the regular services to ensure operational readiness of your smoke detector on your own, you have the option to hire a third party to perform these services. If you hire a professional company that provides a record that all technical and legal obligations to ensure operational readiness of the smoke detector were properly fulfilled, you can be certain that you did all that is required.

In this respect and excluding all liability, we already provided you with a list of relevant service providers (received during installation or when concluding the lease agreement) that you can hire to perform the work to ensure operational readiness of the smoke detectors if you cannot or do not want to perform this work on your own. Of course, you may also hire other service providers of your choice.

7. How does a smoke detector react to cigarette smoke or burning candles?

Cigarette smoke and burning candles generally do not trigger an alarm due to the sensitive sensors of a tested smoke detector, unless a large amount of cigarette smoke is directly blown into the smoke detector intentionally or a burning candle is held right under the smoke detector.

8. What should I do when the smoke alarm is triggered?

Check immediately if there is any smoke. If yes, follow the instructions below immediately.

If in doubt always dial the emergency number 112

*Fire in the building, **not** in your apartment*

1. Close your apartment door
2. Do not leave your apartment
3. Alert the fire department – 112
4. Get yourself noticed at a smoke-free window

*Fire **in** in your apartment*

1. Leave your apartment
2. Close the apartment door behind you
3. Do not use the elevator
4. Alert the fire department – 112

9. I am not sure whether what I hear is the smoke detector alarm, a control signal or a malfunction, what should I do?

Check if there is any smoke. The alarm signal is significantly louder than the audible tone of a control signal. However, if you are still in doubt, contact the degewo service hotline.

10. What should I do if my neighbour's smoke detector beeps? What applies if the neighbour is not at home?

Dial the emergency number 112. Check whether your apartment is safe and free of smoke. More details are shown in item 8.

11. Would it be better to risk a false alarm at the fire department or should I first search for the cause why the smoke alarm was activated?

You should not put yourself at risk. If in doubt, always dial the emergency number 112 and stay in an area that is free of smoke.

12. Who covers the costs for a false alarm of the smoke detector?

For false alarms of smoke detectors there is no cost involved for those who contact the fire department. However, you may be liable for costs if the person causing the alarm or the caller acted intentionally or negligently.

13. Can I change the location of the smoke detector if I don't like its current location?

No! Smoke detectors are installed according to DIN 14676 guidelines. Only when installed according to these guidelines can smoke detectors optimally fulfil their safety feature. For this reason, the installation location is mandatory and may not be changed.

14. I already equipped my apartment with smoke detectors. Does degewo have to install new smoke detectors regardless?

Yes! You as the tenant have a duty to tolerate installation by the landlord even if you already installed your own smoke detectors. Your own smoke detectors will not be removed, but the service providers will install the new smoke detectors in addition according to statutory provisions.

15. What are the alternatives for tenants with hearing disabilities who are not able to acoustically perceive the alarm signal of the smoke detector?

Generally, the service providers may equip the apartments with special smoke detectors.
Tip: Health insurance providers must cover the costs for special smoke detectors for the deaf.
Please contact your health insurance provider.