



Media Release



Half of NSW residents unaware of May 1st Smoke Alarm Legislation

April 2006 – Half of all NSW residents are unaware of new mandatory smoke alarm regulations that come into effect on May 1 2006, according to a new survey¹ by leading fire protection company Wormald and electronic security company, ADT.

“With only two weeks to go until the regulations apply the level of community awareness and confusion associated with the new law is a real worry,” said Geoff Knowles, National Sales Manager - ADT.

“Of concern is that the survey revealed one in five NSW residents do not actually have any smoke alarms in their home and 54 per cent of those residents are unaware of the new law, leaving them particularly vulnerable to the risk of fire.”

Last year the NSW Government introduced legislation to make smoke alarms mandatory in all homes and rental properties from May 1, following a horrific winter season in 2005 which resulted in 13 deaths in two weeks.

The good news is that the majority of households in NSW (82 per cent) have at least one smoke alarm installed. However, the survey also revealed that fewer than half of these (37 per cent) are adequately protected against the risk of fire due to lack of ongoing maintenance.

John Lynch, Wormald's National Commercial Operations Manager (Portable Fire Equipment), said, “Smoke alarms need to be regularly maintained and tested to make sure that they continue to work effectively, yet the survey reveals that just one quarter of people are taking the time to vacuum and dust their smoke alarms and 37 per cent have not changed the battery in their smoke alarm(s) in the last twelve months.”

Although almost two-thirds (64 per cent) of respondents with one smoke alarm are of the opinion that meeting the minimum legal requirements is sufficient to fully protect their home against the risk of fire, Wormald and ADT believe that residents can and should do more than simply comply with the legislation.

“Compliance is a start, however we are urging NSW residents to consider installing more sophisticated systems in their homes such as hard wired or back-to-base monitoring of smoke alarms to maximize the chances of receiving an early warning, said Mr Knowles.

“Furthermore, the minimum legal requirements also depend on the layout, size and sleeping arrangements of each home and may not be as straight-forward as simply installing one smoke alarm in your home. For example, the regulations require homes with more than one storey to have a smoke alarm on each level and homes with

¹ The survey was conducted by Galaxy Research on behalf of the Tyco Fire & Security in April 2006 by telephone among a representative sample of 400 respondents based in NSW aged 18 years and over.

bedrooms not grouped in the one area are required to install a smoke alarm in the hallway or corridor of each separate sleeping area.”

The survey also shows that many people are confused about the new changes with a common misconception that the law only applies to new buildings, renovations or rental properties.

“The NSW Fire Brigade’s effort in educating the public about the importance of protecting their family from house fires is to be commended and it’s important to remember that this type of education is an ongoing process,” said Mr Knowles.

When considering the mandatory smoke alarm regulations and how to effectively ensure the safety of your home and family, Wormald and ADT recommend that you also consider other basic safety equipment. This includes items such as back-to-base monitoring of smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, fire blankets and intruder alarms.

For further home safety information, visit www.wormald.com.au or www.adtsecurity.com.au for a free whole home assessment.

****ENDS****

Notes to Editors:

- ADT security experts have been trained and certified by leading fire protection company, Wormald. They can advise upon, and properly install, the necessary monitored smoke alarms for NSW residents.

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ABOUT TYCO FIRE & SECURITY

Tyco Fire & Security

Tyco Fire & Security, a major business segment of Tyco International Ltd., provides electronic security and fire protection solutions in over 100 countries. With \$11 billion in annual sales and 90,000 employees, its products and services are used to safeguard firefighters, prevent fires, deter thieves and protect people and property. In Australia and New Zealand, Tyco Fire & Security employs more than 5,000 people, supplying products and services to leading businesses and households under the well-known brands of Wormald and ADT. For further information about our products and services please visit us at www.tycofireandsecurity.com.au.

ABOUT ADT

With over a century’s worth of experience and providing electronic security solutions to over 8 million residential, commercial and retail customers worldwide, ADT is the world’s largest electronic security company. ADT’s products include alarm systems and integrated security applications that link access control, CCTV, electronic article surveillance and source tagging systems.

ABOUT WORMALD

Wormald is a leading provider of fire protection solutions. They have been designing, manufacturing, supplying, installing and servicing fire detection and protection systems since 1889. Wormald offers full service and total solutions across numerous applications including building and construction, health care, military, government, leisure management, corporate, education and domestic.