Why is my Smoke Alarm nuisance alarming?

Smoke alarms are a very sensitive electronic item – and rightly so – they are a key safety item in your house or apartment. The very nature of this means there is a small likelihood of the item nuisance alarming for seemingly no reason at all.

If your smoke alarm does sound, do not treat it as a nuisance alarm. First carefully check the surrounds for any indication at all of danger. If a careful check reveals there is no sign of fire, please consider the following steps.

Reset the alarm.

The MATelec Australia range of smoke alarms contain a processor that retains certain error conditions, such as a weak battery. The error condition should reset when the battery is replaced but sometimes it does not and must be manually reset to clear the error. Other possibilities, such as dust, insects are listed below.

Your alarm should also be in accordance with local fire authority recommendations, and as per MATelec Australia instruction manual for location.

A full reset of a MATelec Smoke Alarm

- Turn off the power to the smoke alarm at the circuit breaker.

- Run your hand around the outer circumference of the smoke alarm, until you feel the little protrusion on the side of the alarm. This tab will open the alarm.

- Apply pressure to the tab in a clockwise direction, as per the arrow on the tab. The body of the alarm will disconnect from the base, and swing down, hinged from the opposite side.

- Ensure the alarm is clean – free from dust and insects. A good idea is to remove it completely; it can very easily be pulled free from its hinged mount. A small insect or presence of dust, particularly on a photoelectric smoke alarm, can trigger nuisance alarming. Running a vacuum brush around the outside of the alarm is recommended.

- Remove the battery.

- Press and hold the TEST button for at least 15 seconds.

- Replace the battery, ensuring it is correctly installed, and clip the alarm back to its fully closed position on the base.

- Turn the circuit breaker back on. The unit may take up to 15 minutes to completely recalibrate, during which time it may 'chirp' periodically, and the red light will be on.

- If the red light remains on, or nuisance alarming continues after this time, please contact MATelec Australia for assistance on (03) 5821 9433.