



SMOKE ALARM/SMOKE DETECTOR REQUIREMENTS IN EXISTING HOMES, APARTMENTS & CONDOMINIUMS

INFORMATION SHEET



Single-station smoke alarms* must be installed:

1. On the ceiling or wall outside of each sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of bedrooms
2. In each room used for sleeping purposes
3. In each story within a dwelling unit including basements but not including crawl spaces

Interconnection. Where more than one smoke alarm is installed within an individual unit, the smoke alarms shall be interconnected in such a manner that the activation of one alarm will activate all of the alarms in the individual unit. The alarm shall be clearly audible in all bedrooms over background noise levels with all intervening doors closed.

Exceptions:

1. Interconnection is not required in buildings that are not undergoing alterations, repairs or construction of any kind.
2. Smoke alarms in existing areas are not required to be interconnected where alterations or repairs do not result in the removal of interior wall or ceiling finishes exposing the structure, unless there is an attic, crawl space or basement available which could provide access for interconnection without the removal of interior finishes.

Power source. Single- station smoke alarms shall receive their primary power from the building wiring provided that such wiring is served from a commercial source and shall be equipped with a battery backup. Smoke alarms shall emit a signal when the batteries are low. Wiring shall be permanent and without a disconnecting switch other than as required for over current protection.

Exception: Smoke alarms are permitted to be solely battery operated: 1) in existing buildings where no construction is taking place; 2) in buildings that are not served from a commercial power source; 3) and in existing areas of buildings undergoing alterations or repairs that do not result in the removal of interior walls or ceiling finishes exposing the structure, unless there is an attic, crawl space or basement available which could provide access for building wiring without the removal of interior finishes.

Permits? A permit is not required to install single station smoke alarms, provided:

- The alarms receive their power supply solely from batteries within the alarm device
- No new wiring is required to connect a single station alarm to the building wiring

Rental Unit? If you live in a rental unit (home, apartment or condominium) the owner is required by state law (RCW 43.44.110) to provide smoke detectors as outlined above. The tenant is responsible for maintenance of the detectors.

Do you have more questions? Please contact your local fire department

*Combination smoke alarm / carbon monoxide detectors may be used. See Carbon Monoxide Detector Information Sheet for details.