


BUILDING AND SAFETY SERVICES DIVISION
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INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN

DATE: JANUARY 1, 2014

SUBJECT: SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS IN EXISTING DWELLING UNITS

FROM:



Brian T. Leong, C.B.O, Building Official

On January 1, 2014, the State of California mandated enforcement of the 2013 California Building Standards Code. In an effort to enhance life safety within dwellings units, California Residential Code sections R314.6, R315.2 and California Building Code sections 907.2.11.6, 420.6.2.2 require the retrofit of Smoke and Carbon Monoxide alarms in existing dwelling units when alterations, repairs or additions exceeding \$1,000 in value are made, and permits are required.

All Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms shall be approved and listed by the Office of the State Fire Marshall. Where the repairs or alterations do not result in the removal of wall or ceiling finishes, made to exterior surfaces of the dwelling such as roofing or siding, the addition of a patio/porch or deck, or there is no access by means of attic, basement or crawl space, the alarms may be solely battery operated and not interconnected. Smoke alarms shall be replaced after 10 years from the date of manufacture. Combination Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms are permitted.

Building and Safety Inspection staff shall as part of the inspection process require access to the inside of the dwelling units to verify the proper installation of both Carbon monoxide and Smoke detectors. This shall be a condition of final approval for all permits subject to the requirements. When smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are to be inspected shall be determined based on the type of permit and the required inspections. Please consult the Building and Safety Services staff for details.

It is the responsibility of the dwelling unit owner to comply with ALL State of California regulations with regards to these requirements. Even though the local Building Department is only responsible for enforcing the provisions of the California Building Code and California Residential Code, compliance is required whether or not there is an association with building permit requirements.

Alarms must be installed in **all** of the following locations within the existing dwelling:

- Outside each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms and located a minimum 36" from return air supply ducts, on the kitchen side. (Hallways Leading To Bedrooms) *(Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms)*
- On each story level of the dwelling, including basements and habitable attic rooms. *(Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms)*
- Inside all bedrooms *(Smoke Alarms)*
Inside Bedrooms with gas burning fireplaces or heaters. *(Carbon Monoxide Alarms)*
- Minimum 20 feet horizontal distance from a permanently installed cooking appliance unless would prohibit placement in other locations as required by the code. *(Smoke Alarms)*
- Required locations shall be minimum 36 inches from supply registers of a forced air heating or cooling system. *(Smoke Alarms)*
- Installation near bathrooms with a shower or bathtub shall be no less than a 3 foot horizontal distance from the door or opening. *(Smoke Alarms)*
- For coffered or sloped ceilings, installed on the highest portion of the ceiling. *(Smoke Alarms)*

