



Smoke/Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Make sure everyone in the residence knows what the alarm sounds like and what to do in case of a fire. A smoke detector is just one part of an emergency escape safety plan, especially if a fire occurs in the middle of the night and no lights are available to aid escape.

Location Within a Dwelling Unit

Single and multiple station smoke alarms shall be installed in the following locations:

- In each bedroom
- Outside of each bedroom in the immediate vicinity of the bedroom
- On each additional story of the dwelling, including basements and cellars, but not including crawl spaces and uninhabitable attics.

When more than one smoke alarm is required to be installed within an individual dwelling unit, the alarm devices shall be interconnected in such a manner that the actuation 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. All smoke alarms shall be installed in accordance with the provisions of this code and the household fire warning equipment provisions of NFPA 72.

Alterations, Repairs, or Additions

When interior alterations, repairs, or additions requiring a permit occur, or when one or more bedrooms are added or created in existing dwellings, the individual dwelling unit shall be provided with smoke alarms located as required for new dwellings; the smoke alarms shall be interconnected and hardwired.

Exceptions:

- Smoke alarms in existing areas shall not be required to be interconnected and hardwired where the alterations or repairs do not result in the removal of the interior wall or ceiling finishes exposing the structure, unless there is a crawl space or basement available which could provide access for hardwiring and interconnection without the removal of interior finishes.
- Work on the exterior which does not require entry into the interior for inspection.

Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a toxic, colorless, odorless gas that is formed as a product of the incomplete combustion of carbon or a carbon compound. CO is produced by combustion engine exhaust, portable propane heaters, barbecues burning charcoal, and portable or non-vented natural gas appliances. Poisoning is caused by inhalation of CO. There are many symptoms for CO poisoning including headache, nausea, confusion, and shortness of breath. These can lead to convulsion, unconsciousness, coma, and death.

CO detectors must be located within 10 feet of all sleeping rooms and on the same level as those rooms. State law requires CO detectors be placed in new and existing residential structures in Minnesota where building permits are obtained. The requirement is found at Minnesota Statutes, 299F.50.

The CO detector effective dates are:

- January 1, 2007: All new residential buildings
- August 1, 2008: existing single-family homes
- August 1, 2009: Multi-family dwellings

The Department of Public Safety, State Fire Marshal division lists the code requirements online at www.fire.state.mn.us or call 651-201-7200 for more information.