



## Eastside Fire & Rescue

### Smoke Alarm / Detector Requirements in Residences

**Single-station smoke alarms** must be installed:

- On the ceiling, or wall, outside of each sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of bedrooms.
- In each room used for sleeping purposes.
- 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 the alarms in the individual unit. The alarm shall be clearly audible in all bedrooms, above background noise levels, with all intervening doors closed.

**Exceptions:**

- Interconnection is not required in buildings that are not undergoing alterations, repairs, or construction of any kind.
- 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. The wiring shall be permanent and without a disconnecting switch, other than as required for overcurrent protection.

**Exception:** Smoke alarms are permitted to be solely battery operated: in existing buildings where no construction is taking place; in buildings that are not served from a commercial power source; 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** - No permits are 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 the maintenance of the detectors.

Please contact your local fire department with questions.

The intent of this public information sheet is to address the criteria used to determine if a fire alarm system is required, where devices must be located, interconnection of the devices and power supply requirements. For more detailed information, please refer to International Fire Code Section 4603.7 (2009 edition), RCW 43.44.110.