



# Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms Requirements for ALL Residential Uses

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **1. Why are these updates being required in all residential units?**

Prior to 1988 there were no requirements for smoke or carbon monoxide alarms. These alarms play a vital role in providing safe and healthy homes and is a priority in building safe communities. Having these working alarms ensures better protection for you and your family.

### **2. What is Carbon Monoxide?**

Carbon Monoxide is a poisonous gas that has no odor and is invisible. It is produced when fuel burning appliances, such as wood stoves, furnaces, water heaters, etc. malfunction. Between 2018 and 2020 there were 1,200 CO incidents reported to SaskEnergy annually. If you don't have working alarms to alarm you of the danger, you could experience too much exposure to CO which can cause confusion, drowsiness, loss of consciousness, brain damage and even death.

### **3. Why now is the province updating the requirements for smoke and carbon monoxide alarms?**

The health, welfare and safety of residents in their home is a priority in building safe communities. Having working smoke/CO alarms installed ensures you and your family are better protected.

A lot of items found in houses today are a lot more synthetic and flammable meaning when caught on fire they burn a lot quicker and have more deadly toxins released into the home. These can be items such as your furniture, drapery, clothing, cabinetry, etc. With fires spreading quickly and becoming life threatening in less than two minutes, a working smoke alarm can alert you and your family in time to escape.

### **4. How many alarms do I require; my house is single story and basement level. I have 2 bedrooms on the main floor and one bedroom downstairs, there is no attached garage but a natural gas furnace.**

Carbon Monoxide - As you have a fuel fired appliance you are required to have a 2 carbon monoxide alarms; one each floor level and they need to be located within 5m of all bedrooms.

Smoke – For smoke alarms you would need to have 5 altogether. There needs to be one located in each bedroom as well as one in each hallway serving the bedrooms.

**5. *With the new regulations where are the alarms required to be in a single family dwelling?***

- ✚ Smoke alarms are to be located within each bedroom on all levels of the house;
- ✚ Smoke alarms are required in the hallways serving the bedrooms, if there is no hallway then within 5m of the bedrooms;
- ✚ Smoke alarms are required on each floor level even where there are no bedrooms;
- ✚ Carbon monoxide alarms are required within 5m of bedrooms; and
- ✚ Carbon monoxide alarms are required on each floor level;

**NOTE:** You are only required to have carbon monoxide detectors if there is a fuel fired appliance within the dwelling or an attached garage.

**6. *What about the required locations for multi unit residential buildings?***

- ✚ Smoke alarms are required the same for multi unit as they are for single family dwellings;
- ✚ Carbon monoxide alarms are required the in the same locations as single family dwellings however only in units which are adjacent to utility rooms with a fuel fired appliance or a storage garage; and
- ✚ Inside the service room where a fuel fired appliance is contained.

**7. *Do all new alarms need to be hardwired?***

No. All new alarms installed in order to meet these requirements do not need to be interconnected or hard wired. Owners can purchase new smoke or carbon monoxide alarms at most typical hardware stores.

All new alarms must conform to CAN/CSA – 6.19 “Residential Carbon Monoxide Alarming Devices” and CAN/ULC – S531 “Smoke Alarms”.

**8. *Who is responsible for paying for and installing these new alarms?***

The owner of each building, or the owner of each suite within a building that contains a sleeping room, is responsible for ensuring the required alarms are installed, maintained and tested in accordance with these requirements.