

Smoke Detectors

Why are smoke detectors required?

More fire deaths occur in residential buildings than in any other building type. More than half of all fire deaths that occur in residential buildings occur when the occupants are asleep and are unaware that a fire has occurred. Death usually results from asphyxiation long before the fire reaches the bedroom.

Smoke detectors installed in a home give an early warning of smoke and fire thus giving the occupants the critical few moments needed to escape.

General Requirements

In general, the code requires that smoke detectors be provided on each floor of a dwelling, in the corridor giving access to bedrooms and in bedrooms. Detectors in new construction must receive their power from the building wiring and have a battery backup in the event power is lost. In remodeling where connection to the building wiring is difficult to achieve, battery operated detectors may be used.

An important feature of the requirement for detectors being connected into the building's electrical wiring is that there must be no disconnecting means other than the primary over current protection. This means detectors must be wired directly into the building's wiring system and that no switches, plugs or mechanical disconnects are permitted between the main fuse box and the detector.

The code also requires that smoke detectors be located in each sleeping room in newly constructed buildings and centrally located on the ceiling or wall of the corridor or area giving access to sleeping rooms.

Continued...



Where sleeping rooms are on an upper floor, the code requires the detector to be placed on the ceiling in close proximity to the stairway. This requirement is based on the fact that any fire initiating on the lower floors will send products of combustion up the stairway. The position above the stairway will give the earliest warning to the sleeping occupants in rooms on the upper floor.

In buildings with basements, a detector is also required in the basement. The basement detectors should be located near the base of the stairwell.

All smoke detectors, regardless of the location in the dwelling, must be audible in the sleeping areas. In a large home this can be difficult to accomplish. In this case, detectors are usually wired together so if one detects a fire, they all sound the alarm.

Follow the manufacturer's installation instructions.

If you have questions regarding this information please contact:

North St. Paul Fire Department

Phone: (651) 747-2405

Fax: (651) 747-2550

nspfd@northstpaul.org

www.northstpaul.org

License period 2019-2020



NORTH ST. PAUL

