

## Definitions

- **Hardwired:** Detectors powered by a connection to an AC power source.
- **Interconnected:** Alarms that work together to sound when any unit sounds an alert.
- **Battery Back-up:** A system, typically using a 9-volt battery, that keeps the detector in service if there is an AC power outage
- **Supervised System:** Continuously monitored by either human or electronic means that will acknowledge an alarm and relay the information to the fire service.
- **Common Area:** Any area of an apartment building that is accessible by any tenant of any dwelling unit.
- **Integral Garage:** Any garage that is located somewhere within the dwelling's main structure.
- **Attached Garage:** Any garage that may be a separate building structure but is still accessible from the main house without going outdoors.
- **Municipally Connected:** A fire alarm system that is directly connected to the Fire Department.

## General Information

- All devices shall be installed according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Smoke detectors shall be in service for a period of no more than 10 years from the date on the detector. CO detectors are effective for about 2 years; check the instruction manual for details.
- The fee for an inspection is \$30, **payable by money order only**; which is the responsibility of the property owner.
- Once a smoke & CO detector inspection receipt certificate is issued, it is valid for 60 days.
- Apartment buildings having between 4 & 7 units shall have a local fire alarm system with all required features, as well as occupant notification.
- Apartment buildings having more than 7 units shall be required to have a municipally connected fire alarm system.
- Apartment buildings that have *suitable fire resistance separation* and *independent exits* for each unit may be exempt from fire alarm system requirements.

*This brochure has been compiled in association with the R.I. State Fire Marshal Office. It has been presented in order to further understanding with the business community through education.*

**References:** Rhode Island Uniform Fire Code 1 2003 Edition; Rhode Island Life Safety Code 101 2003 Edition; NFPA 72 2002 Edition; NFPA 720 2003 Edition.

### Providence Fire Department Web Site:

[http://www.providenceri.com/sb/fire\\_prevention.php](http://www.providenceri.com/sb/fire_prevention.php)

### Rhode Island State Fire Marshal Web Site:

<http://www.fire-marshal.ri.gov>

### Fire Safety Code Web Site:

<http://www.fsc.ri.gov>



**Providence Fire  
Department**  
325 Washington Street  
Providence, RI  
Phone: 401-243-6050  
Fax: 401-246-6486

# Providence Fire Department

Smoke Alarm and Carbon

Monoxide Brochure



**Providence Fire  
Prevention Bureau**

Phone: 401-243-6050

## Smoke Detectors

### Beginning July 1, 2008:

- Three-family dwelling units shall have hardwired interconnected smoke detectors in each unit. Additionally, hardwired interconnected smoke detectors shall be installed in common areas of the building apart from individual dwelling units.

### Beginning February 20, 2004:

- All new 1-, 2-, & 3-family dwelling units built from this date forward shall require hardwired, interconnected, battery back-up smoke detectors inside and outside each bedroom. In addition, on every other level in the unit, including the basement level.
- Additionally, these new dwelling units shall have interconnected hardwired heat detectors installed in any integral or attached garages.
- Wireless detectors shall be allowed provided that they are monitored by an approved system or panel and provided that such system meets all the audible requirements.
- It is recommended that an additional smoke detector be placed at the top of the basement stairs as well.

### Beginning June 1976:

- Existing 1-, 2-, & 3-family dwelling units are required to maintain previously required smoke detectors. These smoke detectors should be hardwired and interconnected, and they shall be located outside the bedrooms and on each level. If any dwelling unit does not have installed previously required hardwired alarm systems, the unit is then permitted to have battery operated smoke detectors. Note: battery operated smoke detectors ***shall not replace*** existing hardwired smoke detectors and the property owner is required to maintain those existing hardwired smoke detectors

### All other existing residential units:

- These dwelling units are required to have smoke detectors located outside each bedroom, and on each level. Battery operated smoke detectors are permitted for these residential units.

## Carbon Monoxide Detectors

### Beginning January 1, 2002:

- Any dwelling unit constructed after this date shall have hardwired carbon monoxide [CO] detectors with battery back-up.
- All newly constructed dwelling units, including apartments and condominiums, require hardwired, interconnected, battery back-up CO detectors to be located outside of bedrooms.
- All existing dwelling units shall be allowed to have a battery operated CO detectors or plug-in detectors. Plug in CO detectors must be restrained.
- In addition, the local authority having jurisdiction may require additional smoke and CO detectors in rooms or living areas having sofa-beds or other means of sleeping arrangements if in his/her judgment the room may be used for sleeping on a regular or intermittent basis.
- **Exception:** Dwelling units that do not contain any fossil-fuel burning appliance, fireplace, or an attached or integral garage, are exempt from the CO requirements. If any of these items are installed at a later date, all applicable requirements will then apply.

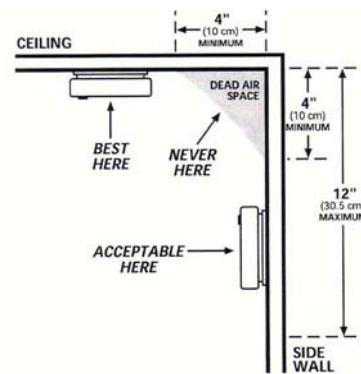


FIGURE 1

## Placement of Detectors

- Ceiling Mounted: At least 4 inches from any adjoining wall surface. (See Figure 1)
- Wall Mounted: More than 4 but less than 12 inches from the ceiling. (See Figure 1)
- Peaked or Sloped ceilings: Within 36 inches of the peak but not closer than 4 inches from the peak.
- DO NOT install detectors within 36 inches of a heating or cooling register, the tip of a ceiling fan blade, near a kitchen door, or a bathroom door containing a tub/shower.
- Detectors within a 20 foot horizontal path of a cooking appliance shall be equipped with an alarm-silencing means or be of the photo electric type.
- When a detector is installed in a stairway that leads to another occupied level, the detector shall not be installed in a location that may prevent the detector from working properly because of a door or other obstruction that may impede the airway that reaches the detector.
- When there are several bedrooms at the end of a hallway, the detector shall be installed near the first bedroom closest to the living area.
- Carbon Monoxide detectors shall be installed as per the specific detector's manufacturer directions.
- Minimum of one carbon monoxide detector is required per occupied level.