
INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Ministry of Housing and Social Development

SMOKE ALARM RULES EXPANDED TO PROTECT OLDER BUILDINGS

VICTORIA – Changes to the BC Fire Code require that every private home and hotel or motel room built before 1979 must have smoke alarms installed by May 1, 2010.

Owners of these older buildings can install battery-operated smoke alarms, rather than connecting smoke alarms to the buildings' electrical system. Battery-operated smoke alarms are an affordable way to improve safety.

Home owners affected should contact their municipality or fire department to bring their buildings up to code by May 1, 2010. There are about 800,000 residential buildings in B.C. constructed before 1979. Some of them may require smoke alarms.

Previously only buildings built after 1979 were required to have smoke alarms, and most municipalities have established bylaws that require smoke alarms be installed and maintained. The new law will increase public safety and awareness, helping to reduce the health risks and property damage caused by fire in older buildings.

The Province developed the new smoke alarm regulations with advice from the Office of the Fire Commissioner and the public. Changes will make the BC Fire Code more consistent with the National Fire Code.

For more information: housing.gov.bc.ca/building/consultation/smoke_alarms/index.html

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