

What are the Smoke & C.O. Laws?

On 2/20/2004 these laws changed in Rhode Island. The governing statutes are found in the Rhode Island Fire Safety Code (section 23-28 of the G.L.R.I.). This refers you to the R.I. Uniform Fire Code Chapter 20.11 for Residential. You are then directed to the R.I. Life Safety Code, as amended, Chapter 24.3 for existing residential homes. The R.I.L.S.C. sends you to NFPA 72 and 720, as amended, for the specific requirements.



GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Existing houses built from 6/1976 to 2/2004 **must maintain all installed, hardwired smoke detectors.** Houses built from 1/2002 to 2/20/2004 **must maintain all hardwired carbon monoxide detectors.** You may **NOT** substitute battery operated for hardwired. You may **NOT** delete any previously installed detector.

Smoke Detector Requirements

- 1). One (1) detector per floor, unless special circumstances apply. Detector shall be located outside sleeping area(s); if there is no sleeping area on that floor, detector shall be located near the stairway leading to the upper level(s).
- 2). Detector at the bottom of the cellar stairs within 2 feet. (if ceiling is joisted then on bottom of joist)
- 3). Houses built AFTER 2/20/04 will also have detectors hardwired *inside* the bedrooms and have heat detectors in the garage.

Detectors may be battery, hardwired or wireless, unless they were previously required to be hardwired. Then they must stay hardwired. Three (3) family homes must be hardwired by 12/31/2010.

Detectors may be mounted either on the ceiling or the wall. **THE FIRE DEPARTMENT STRONGLY RECOMMENDS ON THE CEILING AS SMOKE TRAVELS UP THEN OUT.** The edge of ceiling mounted detectors must be at least 4" from the wall. The top of wall mounted detectors must be between 4" and 12" from the ceiling. For peaked or sloped ceilings, detectors shall be mounted within 36" of the peak or high side of the slope; no closer than 4" vertically or from an adjoining wall surface.

All detectors will have a power ON light.

No detector shall be mounted:

- 1). Inside a garage
- 2). 3 feet from a cooking appliance (see item #6)
- 3). 3 feet from a forced air register
- 4). 3 feet from the tip of a ceiling fan
- 5). 3 feet from a shower room door
- 6). Detectors mounted within 20 feet of a cooking appliance will be of photoelectric design or equipped with a hush/silencer button.

Household fire alarm systems are allowed as long as they meet the above requirements.

ALL SMOKE DETECTORS MUST BE REPLACED EVERY 10 YEARS!!

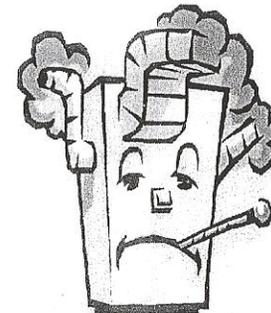
Carbon Monoxide (CO) Detectors

N.F.P.A 720 requires carbon monoxide detectors to be installed centrally outside sleeping areas within 10 feet of the bedroom. Should bedrooms or sleeping areas be separated, and audibility of the alarm to occupants is impaired, more than one (1) detector may be required.

NOTE: Call the local fire marshal if you have a question as to whether an area would qualify as a sleeping area.

Detectors may be battery, combination smoke and CO, hardwired or wireless (different from battery). **PLUG IN DETECTORS ARE NOT ALLOWED.** In houses constructed after 01/01/2002, carbon monoxide detectors must be hardwired. Three-family homes must have hard-wired or wireless smoke and C.O. detectors by 12/31/2010.

While the West Warwick Fire Department strongly recommends a carbon monoxide detector on *every* level, these detectors are no longer required on each floor *unless* there is a sleeping area on that floor or they were previously required and are hardwired into the house's electrical system. Houses with electric heat, no fireplace, and no garage do not need a CO detector.



Combination C.O. & smoke detectors are allowed.

Incomplete combustion producing carbon monoxide