

CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO MASSACHUSETTS REQUIREMENTS FOR CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS

In November 2005, Governor Mitt Romney signed "Nicole's Law" which places certain requirements on owners of all residential properties to install and maintain carbon monoxide (CO) alarms. The Board of Fire Prevention Regulations has developed the regulations (527 CMR 31.00) establishing the specific requirements of the law including the type, location, maintenance and inspection requirements for the alarms.

Who Is Impacted by this Law?

Generally speaking anyone who owns residential property regardless of size (i.e., 1- & 2-family homes, multi-family buildings, apartments, condominiums and townhouses, etc.) that contains fossil burning fuel equipment (i.e., oil, gas, wood, coal, etc.) OR contains enclosed parking (i.e., attached or enclosed garage) in Massachusetts, is required to install CO alarms by March 31, 2006. In certain limited instances (see below), the installation requirements are deferred until January 1, 2007.

What Do I Have to Do?

Install CO alarms on every level of your home except for basements and attics that do not have habitable living spaces (i.e., family rooms, dens, etc.) by March 31, 2006.

What Kinds of CO Alarms Are Allowed?

- There are several types of alarms that are allowed; they include:
- Battery powered with battery monitoring;
- Plug-in (AC powered) units with battery backup;
- AC primary power (hard-wired – usually involves hiring an electrician) with battery backup;
- Low-voltage or wireless alarms; and
- Qualified combination smoke and CO alarms.

What Are Qualified Combination Alarms?

Acceptable combination smoke and carbon monoxide alarms must have simulated voice and tone alarms that clearly distinguish between the two types of emergencies. If you have questions about various types of smoke alarms, contact your local fire department.

What Am I Required to Do if I'm a Landlord?

Landlords must install CO alarms in each dwelling unit. Landlords also must inspect, test and maintain the CO alarms at least once a year or at the beginning of any rental period (such as lease renewal). Batteries are required to be replaced once a year. Tenants should report any problems with alarms to the landlord immediately and learn to recognize the difference between the smoke detector and the carbon monoxide alarm

What Are the Limited Instances Where I Don't Have to Install CO Alarms until January 1, 2007?

Owners of residential buildings that notify the local fire department and choose the alternative compliance option and buildings owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (i.e., public housing units) will not be required to install CO alarms until January 1, 2007.

Where Do I Have To Put These CO Alarms?

In most residences, carbon monoxide alarms are required to be located on every level of a home or dwelling unit including habitable portions of basements and attics. On levels with sleeping areas the alarms must be placed within ten feet of the bedroom doors. CO alarms do not go inside garages, but in the adjacent living areas.

When Do I Have to Install CO Alarms?

Most residences are required to install CO alarms by March 31, 2006. After that date anyone who sells their property will be required to have an inspection by the fire department prior to the sale or transfer of their property.

For Complete Information Contact:

Department Of Fire Services
P.O. Box 1025, Stow, MA 01775
P.O. Box 389, Northampton, MA 010160
<http://www.mass.gov/dfs>
www.mass.gov/dfs

Options for Smoke, Carbon Monoxide (CO) and Combination Smoke/CO alarms.

Option A: I have existing smoke alarms and wish to add CO alarms.

HD Supply Part #	Vendor	Vendor Part #	Type	Description
126748	Firex	10000/6040	Hard-wired with Battery backup	CO alarm with Monox sensor, 30 day self-test and true end of life indication

Option B: I have existing smoke alarms and wish to add more smoke and/or CO alarms WITHIN 20 feet of a bathroom or kitchen.

HD Supply Part #	Vendor	Vendor Part #	Type	Description
126748	Firex	10000/6040	Hard-wired with Battery backup	CO alarm with Monox sensor, 30 day self-test and true end of life indication
126733	Firex	4480	Hard-wired with Battery backup	Photoelectric smoke alarm
126567	Firex	480	Battery Operated	Photoelectric smoke alarm

Option C: I have existing alarms that are interconnected and wish to replace them.

HD Supply Part #	Vendor	Vendor Part #	Type	Description
126748	Firex	10000/6040	Hard-wired with Battery backup	CO alarm with Monox sensor, 30 day self-test and true end of life indication
126733	Firex	4480	Hard-wired with Battery backup	Photoelectric smoke alarm

There are limited instances in which owners of residential building and the State Of Massachusetts Public Housing do not have to install CO alarms until 1/1/07. contact the local Fire Department.

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