



Lynn Fire Department Fire Prevention Bureau

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Lynn Fire Department Sale of Property and Safety Inspection

MGL section 26F and 26F ½ : Sale or Transfer of Property

Smoke, Carbon Monoxide and Heat of One and Two Family Dwellings

Typical One and two family residences built **before January 1, 1975**:

Smoke alarm requirements:

- On every habitable level of the residence.
- Bottom of the basement stairs located on the ceiling.
- On the ceiling at the base of each stairway leading to a floor above (not within the stairway).
- On the ceiling outside each separate sleeping area.
- Must be Photoelectric (Can be combination with Carbon Monoxide).
- May be battery-powered, hardwired, or a combination of both in some circumstances.
- Smoke alarms cannot be more than 10 years old or exceed manufacturer's recommended life, whichever comes first.
- In **two-family dwellings** when unit two has combined living space to the third floor, the third floor shall be connected from inside the unit to the common areas (Front and rear hallways as well as the basement). This can be achieved either by hard-wired or battery-operated photoelectric with wireless technology.
- In **two family dwellings** that do not have a third-floor area must have interconnected smoke alarms in the common areas (Front and rear hallways as well as the basement). This can be achieved either by hard-wired or battery-operated photoelectric with wireless technology.

New or Replacement alarms:

- Must be Photoelectric. (Can be in combination with Carbon Monoxide.)
- Must have hush feature to silence alarms.
- Battery-powered smoke alarms must have 10 year, sealed, non-rechargeable, non-replaceable batteries.

Carbon Monoxide alarms are required as follows:

- On every level of the residence, including habitable portions of basements and attics and must be located within 10 feet of each bedroom door.
- Combination alarms (Photoelectric Smoke and Carbon Monoxide) may be used.

- Combination alarms must have both a tone and simulated voice alarm to distinguish the type of emergency.
- May be either: battery-powered, plug-in with battery backup, hardwired with battery backup, or system type.

Typical One and two family residences built **between January 1, 1975 and August 27, 1997:**

Smoke alarm requirements:

- On every habitable level of the residence.
- Bottom of the basement stairs located on the ceiling.
- On the ceiling at the base of each stairway leading to a floor above (not within the stairway).
- On the ceiling outside each separate sleeping area.
- A minimum of one smoke alarm must be installed for every 1,200 square feet of living space per level.
- Must be hardwired interconnected Photoelectric smoke alarms.

Carbon Monoxide alarms are required as follows:

- On every level of the residence, including habitable portions of basements and attics and must be located within 10 feet of each bedroom door.
- Combination alarms (Photoelectric Smoke and Carbon Monoxide alarm) may be used anywhere.
- Combination alarms must have both a tone and simulated voice alarm to distinguish the type of emergency.
- May be either: battery-powered, plug-in with battery backup, hardwired with battery backup, or system type.

Typical One and two family residences built **after August 27, 1997 to January 1, 2008:**

Smoke alarm requirements:

- On every habitable level of the residence.
- Bottom of the basement stairs located on the ceiling.
- On the ceiling at the base of each stairway leading to a floor above (not within the stairway).
- On the ceiling outside each separate sleeping area.
- One smoke alarm inside every bedroom.
- Must be hardwired interconnected Photoelectric smoke alarms.

Carbon Monoxide alarms are required as follows:

- On every level of the residence, including habitable portions of basements and attics and must be located within 10 feet of each bedroom door.
- Combination alarms (Photoelectric smoke and carbon monoxide alarm) may be used anywhere.
- Combination alarms must have both a tone and simulated voice alarm to distinguish the type of emergency.
- May be either: battery-powered, plug-in with battery backup, hardwired with battery backup, or system type.

Typical One and two family residences built on or after January 1, 2008:

Smoke alarm requirements:

- On every habitable level of the residence.
- Bottom of the basement stairs located on the ceiling.
- On the ceiling at the base of each stairway leading to a floor above (not within the stairway).
- On the ceiling outside each separate sleeping area.
- **One inside each bedroom.**
- A minimum of one smoke alarm must be installed for every 1,200 square feet of living space per level.
- Must be hardwired interconnected Photoelectric smoke alarms.

Carbon Monoxide alarms are required as follows:

- On every level of the residence, including habitable portions of basements and attics and must be located within 10 feet of each bedroom door.
- Combination alarms (Photoelectric smoke and carbon monoxide alarm) may be used anywhere.
- **Must be hardwired and interconnected with battery backup.**
- Combination alarms must have both a tone and simulated voice alarm to distinguish the type of emergency.
- Must be hardwired and interconnected with or without battery backup

Heat alarms are required as follows:

- Must have a single heat alarm in any garage attached to or under the residence.
- Must be hardwired and interconnected with or without battery backup to the existing smoke detection system.
- Heat alarms are not required in garages of older homes *unless* renovation, addition or modification occurs after January 1, 2008.

Typical One and two family residences built on or after February 4, 2011:

Smoke alarm requirements:

- On every habitable level of the residence.
- Bottom of the basement stairs located on the ceiling.
- On the ceiling at the base of each stairway leading to a floor above (not within the stairway).
- On the ceiling outside each separate sleeping area.
- One inside each bedroom.
- A minimum of one smoke alarm must be installed for every 1,200 square feet of living space per level.
- Must be hardwired interconnected Photoelectric smoke alarms.

Carbon Monoxide alarms are required as follows:

- On every level of the residence, including habitable portions of basements and attics and must be located within 10 feet of each bedroom door.
- Combination alarms (Photoelectric Smoke and Carbon Monoxide alarm) may be used anywhere.
- Must be hardwired and interconnected with battery backup.

- Combination alarms must have both a tone and simulated voice alarm to distinguish the type of emergency.
- Must be hardwired and interconnected with or without battery backup

Heat alarms are required as follows:

- Must have a single heat alarm in any garage attached to or under the residence.
- Must be hardwired and interconnected with or without battery backup to the existing smoke detection system.
- Heat alarms are not required in garages of older homes unless renovation, addition or modification occurs after January 1, 2008.

Types of required smoke alarms:

- Battery operated smoke alarms shall be of Photoelectric technology and have non-removable 10- year sealed batteries (If the batteries can be removed – you got the wrong device)
 - (a) *Exception:* smoke alarms purchased prior to 12/1/2016 that have removable batteries and are not more than 10 years old. **Proof of date will be required by the agent or home-owner for each device. If proof cannot be ascertained, 10 year sealed Photoelectric will be required.**
- Hard-wired Photoelectric technology smoke alarms shall be less than 10 years old and interconnected with each other.

Smoke alarms that will not be accepted:

- Ionization technology smoke alarms. Must be Photoelectric technology only.
- Smoke alarms that are damaged in any way or covered in nicotine and other contaminates.
- Hard-wired smoke alarms that are missing battery back-up batteries or that need replacement due to chirping.
- Devices must be UL or EKT

Mixing hard-wired and battery-operated Smoke Alarms in pre-built 1975 Dwellings:

- In some situations, this technique is allowed. For *example*, a home with no renovations built prior to 1975, where a homeowner or contractor installed a few hard-wired smoke alarms. They may or may not be located in the correct locations, but the hard-wired Smoke Alarms would still have to be maintained. **Under no circumstances can you go from hard-wired devices back to battery-operated.** In this case, adding battery-operated devices in the correct locations to achieve compliance would be acceptable. This scenario would have to be approved by the Fire Inspector.

Wireless technology applications:

- In situations where interconnection of hard-wired smoke alarms needs to be achieved, hard-wired wireless technology may be used as an option.
- In home built prior to 1975, wireless interconnected battery-operated smoke alarms may be used if the battery life is one year.
- Two (2) Family dwellings are required to have wireless interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms and combination in the common areas.

Locations of Smoke Alarms and Carbon Monoxide Alarms in pre-built 1975 Dwellings:

(1) Minimum code for pre 1975 built dwellings with no significant renovations:

- Battery-operated Photoelectric 10- year sealed smoke alarms in combination with carbon monoxide alarms (must have tone and voice feature) or separate carbon monoxide device must be within ten feet (10') of sleeping areas.
- One and two family dwellings must have battery-operated Photoelectric smoke alarms on each level of all common hallways. Must be located on the ceiling.
- Basement location: bottom of the basement stairs located on the ceiling.

(2) Hard-wired smoke alarms must be of Photoelectric technology, interconnected and in areas where carbon monoxide alarms are required, must be hard-wired with tone and voice feature.

(3) Separately installed battery-operated Carbon Monoxide Alarms must be replaced in accordance to manufacturer instructions. Most need replacement between 5 to 7 years. These devices may be installed on the wall or plugged into a receptacle.

(4) Battery-operated combination Smoke Alarm and Carbon Monoxide Alarms must be the 10-year sealed type Photoelectric and have tone and voice feature, installed on the ceiling.

Unusual circumstances for smoke alarms:

- The ten foot rule (10') for compliance distance to bedrooms applies to ceilings with no breaks or arches over nine inches (9") down from the ceiling. *Example:* two bedrooms on either side of a twelve inch (12") break in the ceiling shall have a smoke alarm on either side. Carbon Monoxide coverage is not affected by this rule.
- Single door Bedrooms located off the kitchen shall have smoke alarms installed more than six feet (6') from the stove in the kitchen.

Garage Door to dwelling requirement:

- Any door from a garage that is attached to a dwelling must have a 20 minute fire-rated door.
- This door can be protected on one side with sheet metal and must be at least 1 1/8" thick solid wood or steel.

Proper number on every dwelling in the Commonwealth:

- MGL section 59 states "must be of nature and size and situated on the building so that it is visible from the nearest street." Contrasting color and at least four inches (4") in size.

Common areas (hallways and stairways) and porches:

- Common areas must be kept free and clear of all storage and combustibles. This includes front and rear porches. Washing machines and Dryers shall not be in any common hallway regardless of size of space. If found, all appliances must be removed and hook-ups permanently capped via permit. Nothing belongs in the common hallway – this area is for egress only!

Unapproved locks on egress doors and rooms:

- Double keyed deadbolt locks must be replaced with thumb latch type. This includes front and rear common hallway doors and apartment doors.
- Unapproved rooms being used as bedrooms (example: front “parlor” or “living room” being used as a bedroom) must not have hasp locks, slide locks, or locking doorknobs.

Open wiring and other dangerous conditions:

- Any open wiring such as electrical junction boxes without covers, wiring that does not terminate into a junction box, electrical panels without covers, hanging lighting or open outlets and switches all must be repaired by a licensed Electrician.
- Extension cords that are being used from room to room or being used in a permanent manner shall be removed.

Exit doors from apartments:

- No furniture or other storage shall block these egresses. The door must open completely to the doors' width to accommodate escape.
- All doors must have proper doorknobs with no unusual locking devices that require more than one motion to activate.

Basement area requirements, Heating Systems and Oil Tanks:

- Basements must be clean, and a reasonable amount of storage would be allowed. Tires, Gasoline or other Flammable liquids, propane tanks of any size, mattresses or large piles of combustibles is not allowed.
- All areas of the basement must be seen. Locked areas shall be accessible for inspection.
- All heating systems, whether gas or oil, must have covers on the units and no open wiring.
- Abandoned Oil tanks must be removed properly via a permit.
- Oil lines must be jacketed (usually orange). Copper oil lines in the floor with improper protection must be upgraded.
- All flue pipes that terminate into a chimney must be completely sealed around all piping to prevent the backup of carbon monoxide.
- All flue piping must be secured with proper connections and pitched properly.
- In dwelling units of three or more units, no habitation is allowed in the basement. This includes but not limited to, bedrooms, entertainment, exercise rooms, offices, kids play areas etc.
- In one and two family homes, bedrooms below grade must be in accordance to the *Building Code* for proper size egress windows and access. Documentation may be required to prove that a permit was granted.

Low Voltage Fire Alarm System:

Some dwellings may be equipped with a Low Voltage Smoke Alarm System (These buildings will have a Fire Alarm panel). The following is required to pass inspection:

- Proper maintenance and annual testing are required on all Fire Alarms systems and equipment. Deficient-free documentation must be provided to the Fire Prevention Bureau.
- If Smoke detectors are more than 10 years old, complete replacement of devices will be required.

Six (6) Unit Dwellings or more require:

Low Voltage Smoke Alarm System (These buildings will have a Fire Alarm panel). The following is required to pass inspection:

- Proper maintenance and annual testing are required on all Fire Alarms systems and equipment. Deficient-free documentation must be provided to the Fire Prevention Bureau.
- If Smoke detectors are more than 10 years old, complete replacement of devices will be required and/or a Sensitivity test of devices.
- Fire Alarm system to a Central Station monitoring company.
- Pull stations, Horn Strobes, Carbon Monoxide Alarms located in the basement connected to the Fire Alarm Control Panel.
- A minimum of **75 db is required** at the pillow with all barriers in place (doors shut). If this cannot be achieved with common hallway horn/strobes, mini sounders/horns must be installed in each unit.
- Units that have 110-volt smoke alarms (Hard-wired) must be less than 10 years old. Units with battery operated smoke alarms must also be less than 10 years old.
- Heat Detectors must be replaced if over 14 years old or have been covered in grease or damaged in any way.
- All Emergency Lighting as well as Exit signage must be tested and operating correctly.

Sprinkler Systems:

- Proper maintenance and annual testing are required on all sprinkler systems. Deficient-free documentation must be provided to the Fire Prevention Bureau.
- Spare Sprinkler Box with a sufficient amount of spare sprinkler heads and a wrench is also required.
- Fire Department Connections (FDC) shall have proper covers.

Fire Escapes:

- Buildings with fire escapes must have inspection certifications less than 5 years old with no deficiencies. Inspection certificates must be given to the Fire Prevention office prior to inspection.

All Sale of Property inspections are performed on Wednesdays, Thursdays only between the hours of 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

Applications can be found at Lynnfire.org . Click on “Lynn Fire Portal” and it will prompt you to make an account. Click on “My Portal”, “Apply online”, “Fire Department”, “Sale of Property Fire Certificate”. Fill in all the information requested and submit. You can pay online through the portal.

You can still make out and application in person at the Fire Prevention office located at 725 Western Ave.

Fees for Inspections are as follow:

Single family dwelling or unit	\$50.00
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Two Family Dwelling	\$100.00
Three to Six Family Dwellings	\$150.00
Seven and more Family Dwellings	\$500.00

Payment must be by **check or money order only** made out to the "City of Lynn".
No Cash accepted

We suggest scheduling inspections at a minimum of three weeks out so plan accordingly!

Attention Real Estate agents and Brokers

Assist your clients with all the content listed here and don't forget to test and inspect these homes yourself so we can have a successful inspection. Your diligence will make the difference!

Remember you can always call the office and speak with an Inspector if you have any questions.