

SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS

1. The International Residential Code (IRC) requires smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in new dwellings and when alterations, repairs or additions requiring a permit occur.
2. Smoke alarms shall be installed in the following locations per section 314 of the IRC:
 - a. Each sleeping room.
 - b. Outside each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms
 - c. One on each floor, if a multi-story
 - d. In the basement, if a basement exists

Exception: Work involving exterior surfaces such as roofing, siding or window replacement is exempt from these requirements. Installation, alteration or repairs to plumbing and mechanical systems are exempt. (Exception does not apply in California)

Note: Smoke alarms shall not be installed within 3' of bathroom door, fan or supply registers. Ionization smoke alarms must not be installed within 20 feet horizontal of cooking appliances, photoelectric alarms shall not be installed less than 6' from cooking appliances.
3. When more than one alarm is required, the alarms shall be interconnected so that the actuation of one alarm will activate all alarms.

Exception: Interconnection of alarms in the existing areas is not required where removal of interior finishes is not included in the scope of work.
4. Smoke alarms shall receive their primary power from building wiring.

Exception: Smoke alarm installed as part of an addition, alteration or repair may be powered by battery.
5. Carbon Monoxide alarms shall be installed in the following locations per section 315 of the IRC in new and existing dwellings having a fossil fuel burning heater or appliance, fireplace or in dwellings with an attached garage:
 - a. Outside each separate dwelling unit sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms(s) sleeping unit
 - b. On every floor level of dwelling unit, including basements.

Exception: Work involving exterior surfaces such as roofing, siding or window replacement is exempt from these requirements. Installation, alteration or repairs to plumbing and mechanical systems are exempt. (Exception does not apply in California)
6. Carbon Monoxide alarms shall receive their primary power from building wiring.

Exception: Carbon Monoxide alarm installed as part of an addition, alteration or repair may be powered by battery.

Note: This guide is based on IRC requirements. This is not a complete list of all requirements. Refer to appropriate State and local building codes for all requirements and for additional detail. Note: The State of California has state law that specifies smoke and CO alarm requirements that supersede IRC requirements.