MNSPECT LLC
HELPING YOU COMPLY WITH THE CODE

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SMOKE DETECTOR Q & A

Do I need smoke detectors in my home?

Yes. MN Statute 299F.362 requires that smoke detectors be installed in every residential dwelling in Minnesota.

Where do I need to put the smoke detectors?

Smoke Detectors must be installed:

1. *in each sleeping room/area;*
2. *outside and within the immediate vicinity (recommended 10') of each separate sleeping room/area;*
3. *on each additional level including the basement and habitable attics (a minimum of one unit on each level).*

Installation Requirements:

- *Wall mounted detectors must be located in an area not more than 12" and not less than 4" from the ceiling (or as prescribed in the manufacturer's installation instructions).*
- *Ceiling mounted detectors should be no closer than 4" from a side wall or peak of a vaulted ceiling (or as prescribed in the manufacturer's installation instructions).*
- *Detectors should be mounted away from windows and exterior doors.*
- *Detectors should be mounted on an interior wall.*
- *Smoke alarms and smoke detectors installed within a 20-foot horizontal path of a cooking appliance shall be equipped with an alarm-silencing means or be of the photoelectric type. (This location is not recommended.)*
- *Smoke alarms and smoke detectors shall not be installed within a 36-inch horizontal path from a door to a kitchen, or to a bathroom containing a shower or tub.*
- *Smoke alarms and smoke detectors shall not be installed within a 36-inch horizontal path from the supply registers of a forced air heating or cooling system and shall be installed outside of the direct airflow from those registers.*
- *Smoke alarms and smoke detectors shall not be installed within a 36-inch horizontal path from the tip of the blade of a ceiling-suspended (paddle) fan.*
- *For stairways leading up from a basement, smoke alarms or smoke detectors shall be located on the basement ceiling near the entry of the stairs.*

Why do smoke detectors have to be put in every bedroom when there is one required in the immediate vicinity of the bedroom?

Smoke detectors only offer protection in the atmosphere they happen to be in. If, for instance, a smoke detector is located in a hallway outside of a closed bedroom door, and the hallway area is open to the living room, kitchen and entryway; should a fire occur in any of these spaces, the detector would activate. If, however, the fire started in the bedroom, with the door closed, it would almost have to burn through the door before the detector would activate, by which time, it may be too late to provide early warning to the home's occupants.

How often should I change my batteries?

Batteries should be changed once a year. A good way to remember is to change them when you set your clocks ahead or back for daylight savings time! Most smoke detectors emit a chirp when the battery is low. It is a good idea to press the test button and manually check them periodically.

How long are smoke detectors reliable?

Smoke detectors are only good for approximately 10 years, even if they sound when tested.

Why does the building inspector care if my home has smoke detectors?

MN State Building Code Chapter 1309.0314 charges the building inspector with the responsibility of verifying that the smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are installed in accordance with the Minnesota Statutes.

What if I want more information?

That's an easy one - Call MNSPECT at 952-442-7520!

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