

Requirements for Carbon Monoxide Detectors New Construction and Resale of Single Family Homes

Massachusetts General Law Chapter 148 Section 26F1/2 and 527 CMR 31 require all homes be equipped with working carbon monoxide detectors and requires inspection for compliance before the home may be sold. Inspections are conducted by the fire department to ensure compliance. If the home is found to be compliant, a certificate is issued to the seller at the time of inspection. This certificate must be presented at closing in order for the sale to be finalized.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless, poisonous gas that results from the incomplete burning of fuels such as natural gas, propane, oil, wood, coal, and gasoline. Each year many people die, and thousands more are injured from accidental CO poisoning.

All buildings in Massachusetts occupied in whole or in part for residential purposes, that now or in the future may contain fossil fuel burning equipment, or incorporate enclosed parking within the structure, are required to install and maintain carbon monoxide detectors.

Requirements are as follows:

Location requirements (527 CMR 31):

- “Carbon Monoxide Alarm Protection shall be located in each level of each Dwelling Unit including habitable portions of basements, cellars and attics, but not including crawl spaces. The installation of said unit shall be located in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.”
- “When mounting Carbon Monoxide Alarm Protection on a level of a Dwelling Unit with a sleeping area, the alarm shall be installed in the immediate vicinity of the sleeping area. At a minimum, the alarm shall be located outside of any bedroom, but shall not exceed ten ft. as measured in any direction from any bedroom door.”

New construction, homes built or substantially altered after January 1, 2010, are required to have carbon monoxide detectors *interconnected* and *hard wired* with *battery back up*.

These carbon monoxide detectors are not required to be interconnected and hard wired to the household fire alarm system. Where this is desired however, carbon monoxide detectors shall be compatible with all interconnected fire detection devices (smoke and heat detectors).

Existing residential buildings, homes built prior to January 1, 2010, are required to have carbon monoxide detectors as indicated in “location requirements” however they may be, 120 volt “plug in”, 120 volt hard wired, or battery operated.

Multi-family buildings, reference Massachusetts Building Code 780 CMR, Board of Fire Prevention Regulations 527 CMR, and Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 148.