



**Montgomery County  
Department of Permitting Services**



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**Division of Building Construction**

**CODE INTERPRETATION/POLICY**

| Code/Year<br>International Residential Code (IRC-2015)<br>Maryland Smoke Alarm Law (July 1, 2013)  | Section of Code<br>314                       | Title of Code Section/Subsection/Policy<br>Smoke Alarms |
|--|--|---|
| <p><b>Statement/Background of Issue:</b> When <b>alterations, repairs</b> occur in existing buildings (that have the approved final inspection older than a year) or an <b>addition</b> is constructed to an existing building, a <b>permit</b> applicant is allowed to comply with IRC 2015 requirements. Furthermore, Maryland Smoke Alarm Law took effect on July 1, 2013 requiring upgrading of smoke alarms in dwellings constructed before January 1, 1989. The purpose of this policy is to clarify what are the requirements for smoke alarms in one- and two- family residential dwellings.</p>   |  |   |
| <p><b>Department Interpretation/Policy</b></p> <p>The permit applicant shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the <b>new work areas</b>, install hardwired, battery backup, interconnected smoke alarms in accordance with IRC, Section 314 and NFPA 72, within each sleeping room, outside of each separate sleeping area in the vicinity of the bedrooms and on each additional story of the dwelling. All smoke alarms shall be listed and labeled in accordance with UL 217.</li> <li>In <b>existing areas</b>, install smoke alarms in the same locations as in item.1, except that hard wiring and interconnection is not required if interior finishes are not removed. Smoke alarms must be <b>sealed, battery operated, tamper resistant incorporating a silence hush/button and using long life batteries (sealed smoke alarms)</b>. It is recommended to add one ionization and one photoelectric smoke alarm in every home.</li> <li>Obtain a separate <b>Fire Alarm Permit</b> for all <b>low voltage</b> smoke alarm/fire alarm systems. Proof of <b>system ownership</b> must be provided at plan submittal for the fire alarm permit.</li> </ol> |  |   |
| <p><b>Interpretation/Policy No.</b><br/>BCP 13-01</p>  | <p><b>Date</b><br/>December 22,<br/>2013</p> | <p><b>Division Chief</b><br/>Hadi Mansouri</p>          |