

NEW SMOKE ALARM LEGISLATION

Ver 10/2016

Glossary of Terms*

Dwellings - houses, townhouses (Class 1A) and units (Class 2).

Photoelectric - the method the device uses to detect smoke.

Hardwired - connected to the domestic dwelling's electricity supply.

Interconnected - if one smoke alarm sounds all the other smoke alarms will also sound. Interconnection can be wired or wireless.

Substantial - work carried out under a building development approval or the total building works equals 50% of the dwelling over 3 years.

Storey - a space within a building which is situated between one floor level and the floor level or roof above. This being; in the case of a high set dwelling, a properly constructed room. It may be reasonable, using a performance approach, not to install smoke alarms where the storey is predominantly open (e.g. a highset house on stumps that is used for carparking or laundry purposes only).

* Refer to specific legislation for full definitions.

If you have a specific question or require further clarification, please email SmokeAlarms@qfes.qld.gov.au.

Source documents

- Fire and Emergency Services (Domestic Smoke Alarms) Amendment Bill 2016
- *Building Fire Safety (Domestic Smoke Alarms) Legislation Amendment Regulation 2016*
- National Construction Code 2016
- Australian Standard (AS) 3786-2014
- *Land Title Act 1994*

FOR EXISTING DWELLINGS

From 1 January 2017

When replacing smoke alarms, they must be of a *photoelectric* type which complies with Australian Standard (AS) 3786-2014.

Replacing smoke alarms

Existing smoke alarms manufactured more than ten years ago must be replaced. (Note: Smoke alarms should have the date of manufacture stamped on them.)

Smoke alarms that do not operate when tested must be replaced immediately.

Existing *hardwired* smoke alarms that need replacement must be replaced with a *hardwired* smoke alarm.

From 1 January 2027

Smoke alarms in all *dwellings* must:

- be *photoelectric* (AS 3786-2014); and
- not also contain an ionisation sensor; and
- be less than 10 years old; and
- operate when tested; and
- be *interconnected* with every other smoke alarm in the *dwelling* so all activate together.

Smoke alarms must be installed on each *storey*:

- in each bedroom; and
- in hallways which connect bedrooms and the rest of the *dwelling*; or
- if there is no hallway, between the bedrooms and other parts of the *storey*; and
- if there are no bedrooms on a *storey* at least one smoke alarm must be installed in the most likely path of travel to exit the *dwelling*.

Smoke alarms must be either hardwired or powered by a non-removable 10-year battery.

DWELLINGS BEING SOLD, LEASED OR AN EXISTING LEASE IS RENEWED

From 1 January 2017

Requirements as for existing *dwellings*.

Existing landlord's and tenant's obligations regarding the installation and testing of smoke alarms continue.

Property sellers must lodge a Form 24 with the Queensland Land Registry Office stating the requirements of the new smoke alarm legislation have been met.

From 1 January 2022

Smoke alarms in the *dwelling* must:

- i) be *photoelectric* (AS 3786-2014); and
- ii) not also contain an ionisation sensor; and
- iii) be less than 10 years old; and
- iv) operate when tested; and
- v) be *interconnected* with every other smoke alarm in the *dwelling* so all activate together.

Smoke alarms must be installed on each *storey*:

- i) in each bedroom; and
- ii) in hallways which connect bedrooms and the rest of the *dwelling*; or
- iii) if there is no hallway, between the bedrooms and other parts of the *storey*; and
- iv) if there are no bedrooms on a *storey* at least one smoke alarm must be installed in the most likely path of travel to exit the *dwelling*.

Smoke alarms must be *hardwired* or powered by a non-removable 10-year battery.

NEW DWELLINGS AND DWELLINGS BEING SUBSTANTIALLY RENOVATED

From 1 January 2017

The development approval process for new *dwellings* and *substantial* renovations will ensure that building works approved after this date will bring *dwellings* into compliance with the new laws.

Smoke alarms in the *dwelling* must:

- i) be *photoelectric* (AS 3786-2014); and
- ii) not also contain an ionisation sensor; and
- iii) be *hardwired* to the mains power supply with a secondary power source (i.e. battery); and
- iv) be *interconnected* with every other smoke alarm in the *dwelling* so all activate together.

Smoke alarms must be installed on each *storey*:

- i) in each bedroom; and
- ii) in hallways which connect bedrooms and the rest of the *dwelling*; or
- iii) if there is no hallway, between the bedrooms and other parts of the *storey*; and
- iv) if there are no bedrooms on a *storey* at least one smoke alarm must be installed in the most likely path of travel to exit the *dwelling*.

PRESCRIBED LOCATIONS FOR INSTALLING SMOKE ALARMS

Where practicable smoke alarms must be placed on the ceiling. Smoke alarms must not be placed:

- i) within 300mm of a corner of a ceiling and a wall;
- ii) within 300mm of a light fitting;
- iii) within 400mm of an air-conditioning vent;
- iv) within 400mm of the blades of a ceiling fan.

There are special requirements for stairways, sloping ceilings, and ceilings with exposed beams. Specific requirements will be explained in the *Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008*.

If impractical for the prescribed location requirements to be met (e.g. may be affected by steam from shower or fumes from cooking), the owner may put the alarm at another location that will provide a warning to occupants of the *dwelling*.