Residential Smoke Alarms

Single-Family Dwelling and Duplex Requirements

Smoke alarms are required:
1) In each sleeping room (see Figure 1);
2) Outside each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms (see Figures 1 & 2);
3) On each additional story of the dwelling, including basements and habitable attics and not including crawlspaces and uninhabitable attics. (see Figures 3 & 4).

For more information on alarm placement requirements, see Figures 5 - 9 on the following pages.

Applicable Codes & Laws: 2016 California Residential Code, Section R314; 2016 California Fire Code, Section 907.2.11.2; NFPA 72: National Fire Alarm Code, 2016 Edition, Chapter 29, Section 29.5.1; City Ordinance Chapter XI, Sections 11.2.3f & 11.4; CA SB745 (available upon request)
**Figure 5**

Hallway smoke alarm placement in relation to permanently installed cooking device: Minimum distance between smoke alarm and cooking device is 10 feet (CRC Section R314.3.3). See Code Section for exceptions.

**Figure 6**

Hallway smoke alarm placement in relation to bathroom containing bathtub or shower: Minimum distance between smoke alarm and door of bathroom is 3 feet (CRC Section R314.3.3). See Code Section for exceptions.
Hallway or room smoke alarm placement in relation to heating/air conditioning supply register: Minimum distance between smoke alarm and register is 3 feet. To be installed outside of the direct airflow of the register (CRC Section R314.3.3).

Hallway or room smoke alarm placement in relation to ceiling-mounted fan: Minimum distance between smoke alarm and blade tip is 3 feet. (CRC Section R314.3.3).
Residential Smoke Alarms

Figure 9
Placement Guidelines for Walls & Ceilings

The figure below illustrates proper mounting placement for smoke alarms per Section A.29.8.3 of the 2016 NFPA 72.

City of Albany policy requires that smoke detectors installed in residences be of the "long-lasting lithium-battery-operated, ionization or photoelectric" type with a "hush" button. (All smoke detectors require regular monthly battery checks.) The "hush" button allows residents to temporarily silence the smoke detector in the case of false alarms, and thereby discourages disabling of the unit. When shopping for smoke detectors, look for those which offer a "10-year warranty" and a "long-lasting lithium battery."

For more information, call the City of Albany's Community Development Department at (510) 528-5760 or Fire Prevention Bureau at (510) 528-5775.

City of Albany & State Fire Marshal's Guidelines

- City of Albany policy requires that alarms installed in residences be of the photoelectric* type.
- When shopping for smoke alarms, look for photoelectric alarms (City requirement) which have a sealed 10-year battery (State requirement).
- All smoke alarms must be photoelectric and be listed by the California Office of the State Fire Marshal. Listings found here: http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/strucfireengineer/pdf/bml/list_csfm_approved.pdf
- All smoke alarms require regular monthly tests.

*Per Albany Ordinance No. 2010-06, adopted 7/19/10