



OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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SUMMARY OF LCO 4231

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You asked for a summary of LCO 4231 (HB 5394—*An Act Concerning Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors and Alarms in Residential Buildings*).

SUMMARY

This bill requires all one-family dwellings, instead of only those issued new occupancy building permits on or after October 1, 1978, to be equipped with smoke detection and warning equipment (smoke detectors). It also requires all one- and two-family dwellings, instead of only those issued new occupancy building permits on or after October 1, 2005, to be equipped with carbon monoxide (CO) detection and warning equipment (CO detectors), unless they do not contain a fuel burning appliance, fireplace, or attached garage. (Under the state Fire Safety Code, post-2005 buildings also do not have to meet the CO detection requirement if they do not contain a fuel burning appliance, fireplace, or attached garage.)

The bill requires that an application for a permit to do interior work (construction, additions, or alteration) on a residential building indicate if the building will be occupied while the work is being performed. It establishes CO and smoke detector requirements for buildings so occupied.

The bill sets standards CO and smoke detectors must meet, which are the same as those set in regulations for existing dwellings, and it requires the equipment to be installed in the same locations as required by the Fire Safety Code for such equipment in new one- and two-family dwellings.

The bill also allows municipalities, by ordinance, to establish a fine of up to \$250 for a violation of its provisions.

The bill takes effect on October 1, 2012.

BUILDINGS UNDERGOING REPAIRS

An owner of a residential dwelling, or his or her authorized agent, who applies for a building permit for interior work must indicate on the application whether the building will be occupied during the period while the work is being performed. If the building will be occupied, the bill requires temporary installation of a battery operated (1) CO detector, unless the building does not contain a fuel-burning appliance, fireplace, or attached garage, and (2) smoke detector. The bill prohibits local building officials from issuing building permits for interior work unless the building owner or agent indicates that he or she has been informed of these requirements and complies or intends to comply with them.

EQUIPMENT STANDARDS

The bill requires CO and smoke detectors to be tested and certified under standards issued by the American National Standards Institute and Underwriters Laboratories. They may be (1) powered solely by battery and (2) installed as separate devices or as a single device providing protection from both CO and smoke. They must be installed in the same locations as is required by the Fire Safety Code for such equipment in new dwellings.

VIOLATIONS

The bill allows municipalities, by ordinance, to establish a fine of up to \$250 for a violation of its provisions. The police or other person authorized by the municipality's chief executive officer may issue citations for violations. A municipality that adopts an ordinance must adopt a citation hearing procedure and follow the procedure outlined in law for imposing fines. The municipality must deposit any fine it collects in its general fund or a special account it designates for the purpose.

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