



The Connecticut Fire Marshals Assoc.

Fire Marshal Kevin J Kowalski - Legislative rep.
kkowalski@simsburyfd.org 860-658-1971

Testimony on Proposed House Bill 6160 AA Requiring Working Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors in all Residential Buildings and Private Dwellings at the Time Title is Transferred

Senator Hartley, Representative Dargan, Members of the Public Safety and Security Committee, I am Kevin Kowalski and I represent the CT Fire Marshals Association. I am here today to speak on Proposed House Bill 6160. We support the intent of this bill, assuring that there are smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in every residential building.

We do, however, have two issues that we would like to further work on with the Committee. We suggest requiring all residential buildings be required to have smoke detectors. Current statute requires smoke detectors only in those residential buildings with a building permit issued after 1978. Homes built prior to 1978 are not required to have smoke detectors. Proposed House Bill 5541 would require all residential buildings to have both smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Under HB 5541, older homes would at least have inexpensive battery operated smoke detectors.

Additionally, the question is often asked, who will verify that there is a working detector in these dwellings? In doing a brief review in the New England area, Vermont and Massachusetts have these requirements. In Vermont, the seller certifies to the buyer that detectors are present on a form provided by the state. Once signed by the seller and buyer it is sent to the Vermont State Division of Fire Safety. In Massachusetts, the local fire department inspects for compliance and issues a certificate.



The Connecticut Fire Marshals Assoc.

Fire Marshal Kevin J Kowalski - Legislative rep.
kkowalski@simsburyfd.org 860-658-1971

The CT Fire Marshals Association is willing to work out the details with the Public Safety and Security Committee on this important legislation to help insure that all homes are protected with these inexpensive life saving devices.

Thank you.



VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF FIRE SAFETY
 Office of the State Fire Marshal, State Fire Academy and State Haz-Mat Team
 www.vtfiresafety.org

6160
 VERMONT
 TO Sean
 Kevin test man
 Kowalski

CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE

Return this completed form and payment to the appropriate Regional Office

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Barre Regional Office
1311 US RTE 302, Suite 500
Barre, VT 05641
Phone: (802) 479-4434
Fax: (802) 479-4446 | <input type="checkbox"/> Rutland Regional Office
56 Howe Street, Building A, Ste 200
Rutland, VT 05701
Phone: (802) 786-5867
Fax: (802) 786-5872 | <input type="checkbox"/> Springfield Regional Office
100 Mineral Street, Suite 307
Springfield, VT 05156-3168
Phone: (802) 885-8883
Fax: (802) 885-8885 | <input type="checkbox"/> Williston Regional Office
372 Hurricane Lane, Suite 102
Williston, VT 05496
Phone: (802) 879-2300
Fax: (802) 879-2312 |
|--|---|--|---|

**With the Requirements of the Law for Smoke and Carbon Monoxide (Detectors) Alarms
 in Single Family Owner-Occupied Dwellings**

This form shall be used for all new dwellings and dwellings that are sold or transferred after January 1, 2009
 to comply with the requirements in 9 VSA § 2883(a).
All previous forms should be discarded

Date: _____ Date of Closing: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> New Construction <input type="checkbox"/> Sale or Transfer	For Technical Assistance Regarding Smoke and Carbon Monoxide (Detectors) Alarms visit www.vtfiresafety.org or contact the Division of Fire Safety
--	---

Name of Building/Site: _____

Physical Location:
 (9-1-1 Address) Street Name and Number, _____
 City/town, Zip Code _____

Name of Seller: _____
 Name of Buyer: _____

SMOKE ALARMS	CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS	OPERATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Photoelectric-only type Smoke (Detectors) Alarms are installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and are installed in the vicinity of any bedrooms and on each level of the dwelling.	One or more Carbon Monoxide (Detectors) Alarms are installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and are installed in the vicinity of any bedrooms in the dwelling.	All Smoke and Carbon Monoxide (Detectors) Alarms have been tested in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and are in good working order.

CERTIFICATION FROM THE SELLER

I / We, _____ the seller(s) of the above described dwelling certify under oath that the above described dwelling is provided with properly operating Smoke and Carbon Monoxide (Detectors) Alarms installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and as required in state law. 9 VSA § 2882

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF THE CERTIFICATION

We have received a copy of this certification and agree to notify the seller by certified mail within ten days of the date of conveyance of the property that the dwelling lacks Smoke or Carbon Monoxide (Detector) Alarms or that the (Detectors) Alarms are not operable.

 Signature of Buyer or legal representative Date _____
 Signature of Buyer or legal representative Date

SMOKE ALARM REQUIREMENTS

Photoelectric-only type of smoke alarms are required to be installed in the vicinity of any bedrooms and on each level of a dwelling, for all new dwellings and dwellings that are sold or transferred, beginning January 1, 2009.

The law allows the use of photoelectric and carbon monoxide combination alarms but it does not allow ionization /photoelectric combination alarms to be used for these specific locations.

Ionization smoke alarms are permitted to be used in supplemental locations for additional protection. Smoke alarms save lives, prevent injuries, and minimize property damage by alerting people to a fire when a fire is still small. Smoke alarms need to be properly installed, maintained and replaced when needed.

CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) ALARM REQUIREMENTS

CO alarms are required to be installed in the vicinity of any bedrooms for all new dwellings and dwellings that are sold or transferred, beginning July 1, 2005.

Heating appliances that are not working properly are the major cause of unintentional carbon monoxide poisoning in Vermont. Other common sources include emergency generators or space heaters and motor vehicles left running in attached garages.

It is very important to be aware of the early signs of CO poisoning. Exposure to CO can mimic flu systems - headaches, dizziness, disorientation, nausea and fatigue. Higher levels of exposure will result in disorientation and drowsiness, leading to unconsciousness and death. Often the symptoms will be less when the person exposed to carbon monoxide leaves the building, only to have the symptoms reoccur when the person re-enters the building.

POWER SUPPLY FOR ALARMS

Smoke alarms installed in a dwelling constructed after **January 1, 1994** and carbon monoxide alarms installed in a dwelling constructed after **July 1, 2005** must be directly wired to the building electrical service and have a battery back up.

Alarms that are hard-wired into the home electrical system should be installed by a qualified electrician.

INSTALLATION INFORMATION

Choose smoke and carbon monoxide alarms that bear the label of Underwriters Laboratories or another nationally recognized testing laboratory.

Read and follow the manufacturers' instructions that are supplied with each alarm.

Install photoelectric-only smoke alarms in the vicinity of any bedrooms and on each level of a dwelling including the basement.

Install smoke alarms in each bedroom for additional protection and interconnect smoke alarms together so if one sounds an alarm, they all sound an alarm, to make sure the alarm is heard.

Mount smoke alarms on flat ceilings no closer than **4"** from the adjoining wall surface. Mount smoke alarms on walls no closer than **4"**, and not further than **12"**, from the adjoining ceiling surface. Do not install a smoke alarm within **36"** of a ceiling suspended fan, a supply register or the door to the bathroom or kitchen.

ALARM MAINTENANCE

Clean alarms monthly by gently vacuuming to remove dust and cobwebs to allow proper air flow through all vents.

Install a new battery in all alarms that require changing the battery at least once a year. Immediately install a new battery if an alarm "chirps," warning the battery is low.

Smoke and CO alarms don't last forever. Replace smoke alarms when they are **10** years old and carbon monoxide alarms when indicated in the manufacturer's instructions, or when indicated by a trouble alarm on the unit.

Test alarms each month, as indicated by the manufacturer's instructions.

OTHER FIRE SAFETY TIPS

Follow these simple safety rules to prevent hazardous situations in the home:

- 1) Use smoking materials properly. Never smoke in bed.
- 2) Keep matches or lighters away from children.
- 3) Store flammable materials in proper containers.
- 4) Keep electrical appliances in good condition and don't overload extension cords or electrical circuits.
- 5) Keep stoves, barbecue grills, fireplaces and chimneys grease- and debris-free.
- 6) Never leave anything cooking on the stove unattended.
- 7) Keep open flames, like candles, away from flammable materials.
- 8) Don't let rubbish accumulate.
- 9) Keep at least one working fire extinguisher on every floor.
- 10) Have an escape plan and make sure all family members know it.
- 11) Use generators or other fuel-powered machines outside the home. CO fumes are odorless and can quickly overwhelm you.
- 12) Inspect home heating equipment yearly and maintain them in good working order according to the manufacturer's instructions.



Vermont Division of Fire Safety

OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL & STATE FIRE ACADEMY