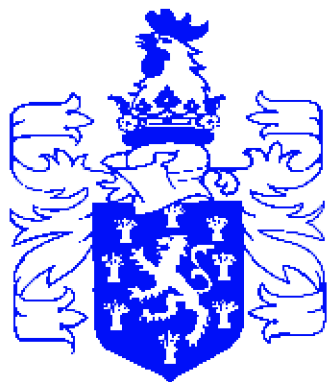


# SOUTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

## BUILDING CONTROL



## SMOKE DETECTORS IN DWELLINGS

### GUIDANCE NOTE 4

## Smoke Detectors in Dwellings

In the UK a substantial number of people die and others are injured in domestic fires every year, many from smoke inhalation. Installing and maintaining smoke alarms within your house would significantly reduce those deaths and injuries.

### **PURCHASING A SMOKE ALARM**

When purchasing a smoke alarm ensure it complies with a British Standard or the International Standard Organisation (ISO) standard. For self-contained smoke alarms they must comply to BS 5446 Part 1 1990, for automatic fire detection, and to BS 5839 Part 1 1988 for an alarm system.

Never buy a second-hand smoke detector. Look for the BS kitemark or the CE mark with the standards displayed.

### **WHERE ARE SELF-CONTAINED SMOKE ALARM SYSTEMS REQUIRED?**

All new dwellings and extensions to existing dwellings

**NB** In all new dwellings the smoke alarms must be permanently wired to an electric circuit, which is fused separately at the distribution board, with standby power supply such as a battery or capacitor.

- In loft conversions

Self-contained smoke alarms are not recommended for use in areas such as kitchens, garages or places where steam, condensation or fumes could give rise to false alarms. More appropriate and effective detectors are available for such instances. e.g. heat detectors.

Electrical installations need to be either, installed by a Registered Part P Electrical Installer, or inspected and tested by a building control body (for which an additional charge is payable).

## **LOCATION OF DETECTORS**

The guidance that illustrates how the building regulations can be met says that in a typical dwelling detectors should be fitted at all floor levels and linked together with an audible sounder built in. (In addition B.S. 5839 Part 6 2004 recommends heat alarms are provided in a kitchen and the principal habitable room.) Large dwellings, i.e. where storeys exceed 200m<sup>2</sup> and/or are 3 storeys and above, should have increased coverage.

## **MAINTENANCE**

Building control have no authority to ensure that smoke alarms are maintained, however it is vitally important that your smoke alarm is regularly checked. Further information can be obtained from the manufacturers' instructions.

## **POSITIONING**

Smoke alarms should be located in a circulation route such as the hall or landing, so that there is one:

- Within 7.5m of the door to every habitable room
- Ceiling mounted and at least 300mm from walls and light fittings

Heat alarms should be located in:

- A kitchen when it is not separated from the circulation route by a door

In order to operate as effectively as possible care should be taken when positioning smoke detectors.

Do not position above a heater. Remember it must be easy and safe to reach for maintenance purposes

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