



## City of Ashland Building Safety Division

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## Policies / Interpretations / Procedures

BD-PP-0016

### SMOKE ALARM REQUIREMENTS IN RESIDENCES

#### **Policy Summary:**

Provides clarification of when smoke alarms are required in dwelling units.

#### **Background:**

The Oregon Residential Specialty Code (ORSC) and Section 907.2.11.1 and 907.2.11.2 of the Oregon Structural Specialty Code (OSSC) specify the required locations of smoke alarms in new dwelling units. Section R314.3.1 specifically addresses smoke alarm requirements relative to alterations, repairs and additions. These codes assume that there is a clear understanding of which rooms are proposed to be used as sleeping areas. However, our experience is that there are rooms proposed on plans that are labeled as “dens”, “bonus rooms”, etc. that may be used as sleeping areas immediately upon occupancy or in the future.

#### **Discussion:**

It is our intent to educate the applicant as to the smoke alarm requirements. Applicants will be requested to identify the intended use of each room so that plans examiners and inspectors have a clear understanding of which rooms are proposed to be sleeping areas. Staff's intent is to require smoke alarms in identified sleeping areas as outlined in the applicable codes and also to alert applicants of the advantages of voluntarily installing smoke alarms in rooms not designated as sleeping areas but which may be used as such in the future.

ORS 479.260 requires that smoke alarms be installed in accordance with the current applicable building code upon transfer of title. Consequently, it becomes the responsibility of the seller to insure that smoke alarm requirements are met at that time.

#### **Policy:**

For new residential structures, smoke alarm requirements will be applied as follows:

- Plans examiners will ensure that the proposed use of rooms is clearly marked on the plans; staff will accept the room designations as shown by the applicant while recognizing the possibility that a room labeled as a “den”, “bonus room”, etc. may be used for sleeping purposes in the future.
- When judged appropriate, plans examiners will include a condition in the plan review approval which explains the benefits of voluntarily installing a smoke alarm in dens, bonus rooms, etc. The condition would clearly state that it is not a requirement.
- Inspectors will rely on the approved plans when determining which rooms are designated as sleeping areas. Inspectors may also recommend the voluntary installation of smoke alarms in dens, bonus rooms, etc., but smoke alarms will not be required in rooms not designated as bedrooms or sleeping areas. For additions or remodels to residential structures, smoke alarm requirements, as specified in Section 313.2.1, will be applied as outlined above for new residences. Smoke alarms will not be required in rooms not designated or used as bedrooms or sleeping areas. Inspectors may impose additional smoke alarm requirements during the inspection process if an existing room is clearly being used as a sleeping area and was not so identified on the plans.