

SMOKE & CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTOR LAW UPDATE
Revised April 22, 2009

Maine has updated its laws regarding smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. These laws apply to all single family dwellings and multi-family buildings.

Dwelling is not defined in these laws, but the State Fire Marshal's Office has advised MYCA that it defines a "dwelling" (also called a "dwelling unit") in accordance with the National Life Safety Code as:

One or more rooms arranged for complete, independent housekeeping purposes with space for eating, living, and sleeping; facilities for cooking; and provisions for sanitation.

A "multi-family building" is defined in the Life Safety Code as:

A building with two or more dwelling units.

If a building in camp meets the definition of a "dwelling" or multi-family building, the following laws apply:

Smoke detectors shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements in:

- Any building used for a single family dwelling constructed after January 1, 1982;
- Any building used for a single family dwelling in which a bedroom was added after September 19, 1985;
- Any building converted to a single family dwelling after September 19, 1985; and
- Each unit of a building use as for multi-family occupancy regardless of when constructed.

Smoke detectors may be battery operated or connected to the buildings electrical system, by plug-in or hard-wired.

Smoke detectors installed or replaced after March 25, 2010 within 20 feet of a kitchen or bathroom with a tub or shower must be photoelectric-type. However, if they are located in a bedroom they may be ionization-type even if the bedroom is within 20 feet of a kitchen or bathroom with a tub or shower.

At least one Carbon monoxide detector shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements in each area within or giving access to bedrooms in:

- Any building used for a single family dwelling in which a bedroom was added after September 12 2009;
- Any building constructed as or converted to a single family dwelling after September 12, 2009; and
- Each unit of a building use as for multi-family occupancy regardless of when constructed.

Carbon monoxide detectors must be connected to the building's electrical system (either by plug-in or hard wiring) and include battery backup.

If a building does not meet the definition of dwelling or multi-family building but is used as sleeping quarters such as “bunks” for campers, the Fire Marshal’s Office recommends the use of smoke detectors for such buildings that have (i) a fire place or wood stove, (ii) electricity and/or (iii) house more than 6 persons.

Additional information: In the home, (carbon monoxide) is formed from incomplete combustion from any flame-fueled (i.e., not electric) device, including ranges, ovens, clothes dryers, furnaces, fireplaces, grills, space heaters, vehicles, and water heaters. Furnaces and water heaters may be sources of carbon monoxide, but if they are vented properly the carbon monoxide will escape to the outside. Open flames, such as from ovens and ranges, are the most common source of carbon monoxide. Vehicles are the most common cause of carbon monoxide poisoning. *Source: <http://chemistry.about.com/od/howthingswork/a/codetectors.htm>*

Provided by the Maine Youth Camping Foundation, in consultation with the Maine State Fire Marshal's office.

This memo does not include all requirements in the smoke and carbon monoxide detectors laws. You should refer to those laws to answer questions specific to your situation.