



# LEBANON HOUSING AUTHORITY

***This notice applies to all owners of private rental housing utilized in the LHA Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. Adherence to NH Law and HUD Housing Quality Standards is necessary to remain in contractual compliance.***

The State of New Hampshire enacted a revised Smoke Detector-Carbon Monoxide Detector Law effective on July 1, 2011. Smoke alarms shall be installed in all new and existing single-family and multi-unit dwellings regardless of the original construction date. You may view this law, **RSA 153:10-a**, on the State of New Hampshire official **NH.gov** web site by clicking on the link: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/XII/153/153-10-a.htm>.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal has released **Informational Bulletin 2020-05** to address installation and administrative requirements associated with RSA 153:10-a. You may view the **Smoke Alarm Device Requirements in Dwellings Bulletin** on the State of New Hampshire official **NH.gov** web site using the link: <http://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/firesafety/bulletins/index.html>.

**Additionally, effective December 29, 2024, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has implemented updated National Standards for Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE) Housing Quality Standards (HQS) for smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms across all HUD programs pursuant to Public Law 117-328 and in accordance with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 72.**

**1. Smoke Alarm Device Requirements:** All smoke alarm devices must:

- be hardwired with battery back-up pursuant to NH law; or where battery power only is permitted, equipped with 10-year non-rechargeable, non-replaceable primary batteries and be sealed, tamper resistant, and contain silencing means for nuisance alarms; and
- provide notification for individuals with hearing loss as required by NFPA 72 or any successor standard.

For units built or substantially rehabilitated after July 1, 2010, hardwired with battery back-up pursuant to NH law is the only option.

**2. Smoke Alarm Location Requirements:** Functioning smoke alarm devices meeting the above requirements are required in the following locations inside the dwelling unit:

- In each room used for sleeping purposes (e.g. bedrooms); and
- Outside of each separate sleeping room in the immediate vicinity of the rooms; and within 21 feet of all bedroom doors measured along a path of travel; and
- On each level of the dwelling unit, including basements but excluding crawl spaces and uninhabitable attics.

Additionally, smoke alarm devices must be present on each level of common areas within the property, including stairwells, hallways, and other relevant areas.

All devices must be placed in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and NFPA 72 and must be free from obstructions including stickers, decorations, and paint over the device.

- If mounted on the ceiling, then it must be greater than 4 inches from the wall.
- If mounted on the wall, then the top edge of the smoke alarm cannot be closer than 4 inches or greater than 12 inches from the ceiling.
- When possible, alarms should not be placed within 10 feet of a cooking appliance or within 3 feet of ceiling fans, air ducts, exterior doors, or windows.

- 3. Carbon Monoxide (CO) Alarm Devices:** Functioning CO alarm devices must also be present in accordance with the International Fire Code (IFC) Sections 915 and 1103 and be hardwired with battery back-up pursuant to NH law, unless battery-power-only is expressly permitted (e.g. ICC 1103.09). All CO alarms must meet the UL 2034 standard for sensitivity and UL 217. Combination smoke and CO alarms must comply with UL 2075 and UL 268.

Each dwelling unit must be equipped with functioning CO alarm devices in the following locations:

- Outside each separate dwelling unit sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms; and
- On every occupiable level of a dwelling unit, including basements, but excluding crawl spaces and uninhabitable attics (if a fuel-burning appliance is located in an attic, then the attic space is treated as a mechanical room and must have a CO alarm device); and
- If a bedroom or adjoining room contains a fuel-burning appliance, a CO alarm device must be installed in the bedroom (IFC 915.2.1.).
- Spaces adjoining rooms that contain CO-producing appliances (fireplaces and gas clothes dryers are included).

Additionally, CO alarm devices must be present on each level of common areas within the property, including stairwells, hallways, mechanical rooms, and other relevant areas. It is best to consult with the Lebanon Fire Department to determine specific CO detection requirements for common halls in your building.

Each alarm device shall be located on the wall, ceiling, or other location as specified in the manufacturer's published instructions that accompany the device and in accordance with NFPA 72.

*Buildings which do not have attached garages, loading docks, forced-air heating systems, or **any** appliance or device that uses a combustion method of burning solid, liquid, or gas fuel (furnaces, gas ovens/ranges, dryers, fireplaces, woodstoves and so forth) may be exempt from the CO alarm requirements.*

#### 4. Inspection Violation Response

Any deficiencies related to smoke or carbon monoxide alarms will be classified as *24-hour life-threatening* violations by the LHA. Prompt remediation is required to ensure compliance with these updated standards.

#### 5. Additional Information

There are a few things to be aware of regarding practical compliance with the law:

- 1) Hardwired Combination Smoke Alarms/CO Alarm devices with battery back-up can often be swapped with existing hardwired smoke detectors to comply with some or all of the CO detector requirements provided that they meet the requirements of UL 217, UL 2034, UL 2075, and UL 268.
- 2) While battery powered Smoke/CO alarm devices meet the requirements of the law in certain existing buildings or those without commercial power, you may not replace hardwired with battery back-up devices installed at time of new construction or major renovations with battery-power-only devices.
- 3) **Be aware that the building owner is responsible for complying with the law and for maintaining both smoke detector and CO detector systems.** *All information provided in this notice is based on current LHA inspection standards, is not exhaustive, and does not override any applicable local, state, or federal codes or standards.*
- 4) As always, the **Lebanon Fire Department** is the best resource for information regarding compliance with the law. You may reach them by telephone at **(603) 448-8810**.



31 ROMANO CIRCLE • P.O. BOX 5475 • WEST LEBANON, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03784  
info@lebanonhousing.org • 1-603-298-5753 • TDD 1-800-735-2964

