



INFORMATION SHEET NO. 20

SMOKE ALARMS

Smoke alarms must provide reasonable and adequate warning to occupants when they are asleep so that they may safely evacuate the building in the event of a fire.

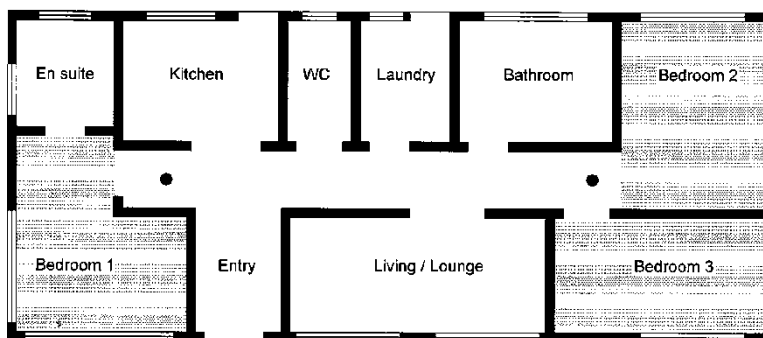
The owner of a residential property is responsible for the installation of smoke alarms within the building that comply with AS3786-1993, and also to ensure that adequate maintenance of each smoke alarm is carried out.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS – As from 1 January 2000, all residential buildings are required to have a smoke alarm installed. The minimum standard for smoke alarms in existing dwellings is a smoke alarm powered by removable batteries, however smoke alarms are required to be upgraded in certain circumstances.

Should the dwelling have changed ownership since this date, the minimum standard is an alarm powered by a 10 year life non-replaceable, non-removable, permanently connected battery. The new owner must ensure that within 6 months of the transfer of ownership, all required smoke alarms in that dwelling have been upgraded and installed.

If the dwelling was constructed after 1 January 1995, the Building Code of Australia requires that the smoke alarms be 240V mains powered. Where any building work that requires council approval is carried out to an existing dwelling, the smoke alarms will also be required to be upgraded to 240V mains powered. Alarms operated solely by batteries are not accepted.

LOCATION – The Building Code of Australia requires smoke alarms to be located on or near the ceiling in every storey, and in any storey containing bedrooms. The alarms must be located between each part of the dwelling containing bedrooms and the remainder of the dwelling e.g. in the hallway leading to bedrooms.



b) Locating smoke alarms in a hallway for a dwelling with two sleeping areas

GUEST HOUSES such as B&B's, hostels or the like have additional requirements to comply with the Building Code of Australia. A smoke alarm is required in each bedroom, plus the hallway or area of the building between the bedrooms and the remainder of the house. A system of emergency lighting in the hallway must also be installed that may be incorporated within the smoke alarm or existing light fittings, providing the lighting is activated by the smoke alarm.

Setting up a Bed and Breakfast or similar business requires Council Development Approval. A floor plan of the building indicating the location of emergency lights, smoke alarms and fire extinguisher is required as part of the application.

*Please note the information contained herein is intended as a guide only.
Further clarification may be obtained by contacting the Council on 8525 3200.*