



# NEW SMOKE ALARM LEGISLATION

## Glossary of Terms\*

**Dwellings** - houses, townhouses (Class 1A) and units (Class 2).

**Photoelectric** - the method the device uses to detect smoke.

**Hardwired** - connected to the domestic dwelling's electricity supply.

**Interconnected** - if one smoke alarm sounds all the other smoke alarms will also sound. Interconnection can be wired or wireless.

**Substantial** - work carried out under a building development approval or the total building works equals 50% of the dwelling over 3 years.

**Storey** - a space within a building which is situated between one floor level and the floor level or roof above.

\* Refer to specific legislation for full definitions.

*If you have a specific question or require further clarification, please email [SmokeAlarm@qfes.qld.gov.au](mailto:SmokeAlarm@qfes.qld.gov.au).*

## Source documents

- Fire and Emergency Services (Domestic Smoke Alarms) Amendment Bill 2016
- *Building Fire Safety (Domestic Smoke Alarms) Legislation Amendment Regulation 2016*
- National Construction Code 2016
- Australian Standard (AS) 3786
- *Land Title Act 1994*

## FOR EXISTING DWELLINGS

### From 1 January 2017

When replacing smoke alarms, they must be of a *photoelectric* type which complies with Australian Standard (AS) 3786.

### Replacing smoke alarms

Existing smoke alarms manufactured more than ten years ago must be replaced. (Note: Smoke alarms should have the date of manufacture stamped on them.)

Smoke alarms that do not operate when tested must be replaced immediately.

Existing *hardwired* smoke alarms that need replacement must be replaced with a *hardwired* smoke alarm.

### From 1 January 2027

Smoke alarms in all *dwellings* must:

- be *photoelectric* (AS 3786); and
- not also contain an ionisation sensor; and
- be less than 10 years old; and
- operate when tested; and
- be *interconnected* with every other smoke alarm in the *dwelling* so all activate together.

Smoke alarms must be installed on each *storey*:

- in each bedroom; and
- in hallways which connect bedrooms and the rest of the *dwelling*; or
- if there is no hallway, between the bedrooms and other parts of the *storey*; and
- if there are no bedrooms on a *storey* at least one smoke alarm must be installed in the most likely path of travel to exit the *dwelling*.

Smoke alarms must be either hardwired or powered by a non-removable 10-year battery.



## DWELLINGS BEING SOLD, LEASED OR AN EXISTING LEASE IS RENEWED

### From 1 January 2017

Requirements as for existing *dwelling*s.

Existing landlord's and tenant's obligations regarding the installation and testing of smoke alarms continue.

Property sellers must lodge a Form 24 with the Queensland Land Registry Office stating the requirements of the new smoke alarm legislation have been met.

### From 1 January 2022

Smoke alarms in the *dwelling* must:

- i) be *photoelectric* (AS 3786); and
- ii) not also contain an ionisation sensor; and
- iii) be less than 10 years old; and
- iv) operate when tested; and
- v) be *interconnected* with every other smoke alarm in the *dwelling* so all activate together.

Smoke alarms must be installed on each *storey*:

- i) in each bedroom; and
- ii) in hallways which connect bedrooms and the rest of the *dwelling*; or
- iii) if there is no hallway, between the bedrooms and other parts of the *storey*; and
- iv) if there are no bedrooms on a *storey* at least one smoke alarm must be installed in the most likely path of travel to exit the *dwelling*.

Smoke alarms must be *hardwired* or powered by a non-removable 10-year battery.

## NEW DWELLINGS AND DWELLINGS BEING SUBSTANTIALLY RENOVATED

### From 1 January 2017

The development approval process for new *dwelling*s and *substantial* renovations will ensure that building works approved after this date will bring *dwelling*s into compliance with the new laws.

Smoke alarms in the *dwelling* must:

- i) be *photoelectric* (AS 3786); and
- ii) not also contain an ionisation sensor; and
- iii) be *hardwired* to the mains power supply with a secondary power source (i.e. battery); and
- iv) be *interconnected* with every other smoke alarm in the *dwelling* so all activate together.

Smoke alarms must be installed on each *storey*:

- i) in each bedroom; and
- ii) in hallways which connect bedrooms and the rest of the *dwelling*; or
- iii) if there is no hallway, between the bedrooms and other parts of the *storey*; and
- iv) if there are no bedrooms on a *storey* at least one smoke alarm must be installed in the most likely path of travel to exit the *dwelling*.

## PRESCRIBED LOCATIONS FOR INSTALLING SMOKE ALARMS

Where practicable smoke alarms must be placed on the ceiling. Smoke alarms must not be placed:

- i) within 300mm of a corner of a ceiling and a wall;
- ii) within 300mm of a light fitting;
- iii) within 400mm of an air-conditioning vent;
- iv) within 400mm of the blades of a ceiling fan.

There are special requirements for stairways, sloping ceilings, and ceilings with exposed beams. Specific requirements will be explained in the *Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008*.

If it is impractical for the prescribed location requirements to be met, the owner may put the alarm at another location that will provide a warning to occupants of the *dwelling*.