

**Carbon Monoxide Alarm Law of Baltimore County
(BCC 35-5-213.1)**

EFFECTIVE: FEBRUARY 13, 2010

COMPLY BY: OCTOBER 13, 2010

PURPOSE: *To establish minimum life safety requirements for the installation of Carbon Monoxide alarms in all applicable residential occupancies with in Baltimore County.*

INSTALLATION REQUIREMENTS:

- Alarms shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturers' specifications for dwellings that contain one or more of the following: fuel burning equipment, attached garage, wood burning fireplace/pellet stove.
- Supply and install one or more Carbon Monoxide alarms in the common area outside of each sleeping area. **(The alarm must carry the listing of a nationally recognized testing laboratory approved by the State of Maryland.)**
- Provide written information on alarm testing and maintenance to at least one adult occupant of the housing unit, and maintain a signed acknowledgement by this adult that the information was received.
- Provide an alarm designed to alert hearing-impaired residents if an individual who is hearing-impaired occupies the housing unit and an occupant has requested the installation of the alarm by certified mail.
- Owners must comply by October 13, 2010 with the legislation, and will be required to certify to the Director of Permits and Development Management that the units are in compliance. Forms are available on the website at www.baltimorecountymd.gov under Rental Registration.
- By state law, all dwellings built after January 1, 2008 must contain hardwired carbon monoxide alarms. Under county law rental dwellings built prior to January 1, 2008, may have the alarm wired into an AC power line with a secondary battery backup, or plugged into an electrical outlet not controlled by a switch, with secondary backup, or battery powered.

TENANTS RESPONSIBILITY

- The tenant must test and maintain the carbon monoxide alarm according to manufacturer's guidelines.
- They must replace the batteries in the alarm as needed, and notify management by certified mail immediately of any malfunctions or other problems with the carbon monoxide alarm, and upon such notice, the owner must repair or replace the carbon monoxide alarm.
- The tenant may not remove or disconnect the alarm and may not remove the batteries or otherwise render the alarm inoperable.

WHAT IS CARBON MONOXIDE?

- Carbon Monoxide, or "CO", is a poisonous, sometimes lethal gas that kills approximately 540 people in the United States annually. Of that number, approximately 200 of the reported deaths were from carbon monoxide emitted from an appliance like a stove or water heater.
- Carbon Monoxide is a by-product of incomplete combustion. Common household producers of carbon monoxide include furnaces, stoves, water heaters, ovens, vehicle or generator exhaust, chimneys, etc.
- Dangerous levels of carbon monoxide may be omitted by malfunctioning fuel burning equipment. This could be caused by a blocked vent or chimney.

**SYMPTOMS OF CARBON MONOXIDE
POISONING**

Carbon monoxide poisoning victims usually initially suffer flu-like symptoms like nausea, fatigue, headaches, dizziness, confusion, and trouble breathing. Symptoms can progress into severe throbbing headaches, drowsiness, rapid heart rate, unconsciousness, convulsions, and in severe cases, death.

**HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOUR HOME FROM
CARBON MONOXIDE?**

- Have your fuel burning equipment inspected by a qualified technician at least once a year.
- Do not use grills inside of the home or garage.
- Do not allow vehicles to run inside of the garage.
- Install carbon monoxide alarms in your home in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.

RENTAL REGISTRATION EXEMPTIONS

Properties that are exempt for one of the following reasons **MUST** comply with the Carbon Monoxide alarm legislation:

- Dwelling that is solely owner-occupied, including: One additional individual who is not a minor without regard to the relationship of the individual and without regard to the number of minors in the dwelling unit related by blood, marriage or adoption to the additional individual or under the legal custody of the individual; and (ii) Individuals related by blood, marriage, or adoption to or under the legal custody of the owner.

- Dwellings with seven or more dwelling units in one building, all owned by same owner.
- Apartment complexes.
- Group houses - Group of not less than 3 attached dwelling units which: have been constructed together in a lateral row surrounded by yard space; are separated from another by a party wall; and have the same owner. Does not include a duplex, semidetached dwelling, or townhouse.
- Dwelling units exempted by the Department as required by federal or state law or regulation. Does not include Section 8 Property
- Dwelling units occupied by a former owner of the dwelling unit who, after having sold the dwelling unit to a new owner continues to reside in the dwelling unit and pays rent to the new owner, provided the residency lasts not more than 12 months.
- Subject to regulations adopted by the Department, dwellings occupied by an owner and an individual paid directly or indirectly by the owner, including a nurse, nanny, or other household assistant.
- Dwelling units solely occupied by a person related by blood, marriage, or adoption to or under the legal custody of the owner of the dwelling unit, which may include one additional individual who is not a minor without regard to the relationship of the individual and without regard to the number of minors in the dwelling unit related by blood, marriage or adoption to the additional individual or under the legal custody of the individual
- Dwellings listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the County Inventory established under Section 32-7-301 of the code, the Baltimore County Preliminary Landmarks list, or the Baltimore County Final Landmarks List.
- Dwellings not connected to public sewer.

Forms are available at all Baltimore County Public Libraries, Senior Centers, Baltimore County Office Building, Room 213, and on the Baltimore County website at www.baltimorecountymd.gov under Rental Registration Forms. Form must be done with every change of tenant.

IF YOU BELIEVE YOU OR YOUR FAMILY HAS BEEN HARMFULLY EXPOSED TO CARBON MONOXIDE, IMMEDIATELY MOVE TO FRESH AIR AND CALL 911.