

Fire and Smoke Alarms Changes to the Law

What is changing?

By February 2022, every home in Scotland is required by law to have interlinked fire alarms. The alarms connect to each other so that when one goes off, they all go off – helping everyone to react quickly and save lives. You might not hear the alarm closest to the fire if you are somewhere else in the house. An interlinked system alerts you to danger wherever you are in the home.

What does my home need?

- 1 smoke alarm in the room where you spend most of the day (usually the living room)
- 1 smoke alarm on every floor, either in the hallway or on the landing
- 1 heat detector in the kitchen

If your home has a carbon fuelled appliance like a boiler, heater, or flue, you will also need a separate carbon monoxide detector. These do not have to be linked to the other alarms.

How much does it cost?

The cost for an interlinked system with sealed long-life battery alarms in a two storey house is around £220, if you fit the alarms yourself. There will be an extra cost if you get a tradesperson to fit them for you.

Can I get help with the cost?

The Scottish Government has provided £500,000 funding to allow to support the changes in the law. To be eligible for support from Care & Repair Scotland, you must live in and own your home that has a Council Tax banding of A-C. You must also either be in receipt of guaranteed Pension Credit, or have a disability and be in a support group for Employment and Support Allowance.

Please visit www.careandrepairsotland.co.uk for more information.

Ask for help.

For advice on fire safety, or to request a Home Fire Safety Visit, contact The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service on 0800 0731 999

If you are concerned about cold callers or about the information given by a tradesperson, contact Trading Standards Scotland on 0808 164 6000

**For more detailed information about the new regulations, visit:
www.mygov.scot/firealarms**



What alarms do I need?

There are two types of alarms that comply with the new standard:

- Tamper proof long-life lithium battery alarms, which can be fitted by householders themselves or;
- Mains-wired alarms, which are cheaper than tamper proof long-life battery alarms, but should be installed by a qualified electrician in accordance with BS7671.

Both types of alarm can be interlinked by radio frequency. Mains-wired alarms, however, are required to be installed by an electrician which will be an additional cost to homeowners. Any re-decoration to walls and/or ceilings should be taken into consideration. You may also need a building warrant if you live in a flat.

Will the new regulations impact my household insurance?

Different home insurance policies provided by different insurers will have varying terms and conditions which a homeowner must comply with in order for their home insurance to be valid. Anyone who is unclear about the terms and conditions of their specific policy in relation to the fire alarm requirements should get in touch with their home insurer in the first instance, to check whether the new requirements will be specifically included in their policy or not.

I live in social rented housing, what do I do?

Social landlords (local authority and housing association landlords) are aware of the new standard and have been working to ensure that the new alarms are in place, where needed. The standard will be monitored by the Scottish Housing Regulator, who may intervene as they deem appropriate for any non-compliance. For further, please contact your relevant association on the contact number below.

I live in private rented housing, what do I do?

As the new standards for fire alarms extend those which currently apply in the Private Rented Sector to housing of all tenures, your landlord should already be complying. The standard is enforced by the right of tenants to apply to the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber), so if you believe that your landlord is failing to comply, you can apply to the First-tier Tribunal. Penalties for non-compliance would be determined by the Tribunal.

Helpful numbers

Highland Council - 01349 886602

Albyn Housing - 01349 852978

Communities Housing Trust - 01463 233549

Cairn Housing Association - 01862 893417

Pat Munro Homes - 01349 800019



Sutherland Community Partnership

