

1. Legislative requirements

Legislative changes to Clause F7 of the New Zealand Building Code came into effect on 24 April 2003, requiring domestic smoke alarms to be installed in residential households when undertaking any building work on a dwelling, including repairs and alterations.

This provision applies to all new household units, additions and alterations, or a change of use to existing household units. There are no exceptions to this requirement; this means that if an owner of a dwelling alters or modifies a dwelling in any way, a building consent shall not be issued until smoke alarms are shown on consent documentation as per the requirements of clause F7.

2. Background

It has been brought to our attention that some security companies are installing hardwired systems that do not fully meet the requirements of the New Zealand Building Code. These systems do not have a hush facility or a test button option. However, the alarm that the detector connects to does have the ability to hush and sound specialised siren signals.

With regard to the test button option, the testing of these systems can ideally be carried out by means of a non-contaminating artificial smoke aerosol, which theoretically is the proper way to test the full functionality of the smoke alarm.

3. Installation

To assist in ensuring that these hardwired smoke alarms are installed correctly, it is recommended that the NZS 4514:2009 Interconnected smoke alarms for single household units be quoted. This standard, although not mandatory, does provide the necessary criteria for installation, power source, wiring size, maintenance, and location of smoke alarms.

The council's computer system text will be updated in due course to reflect the above accepted alternative solution. This text can still be edited for whichever type of smoke alarms is installed; battery powered or hardwired installations.

4. References

NZS 4514:2009 Interconnected smoke alarms for single household units
New Zealand Building Code clause F7 Warning Systems
AC2209 Domestic smoke alarms