

Smoke Alarms in Class 1, 2 and 4 Buildings

From 1 October 2009 smoke alarms are not only required to be installed in new dwellings and units but also in existing dwellings and units when the ownership is transferred or when the owner lets the dwelling or unit under a new tenancy agreement.

Class 1a	Single dwelling
Class 1b	Boarding house, guest house, hostel or the like
Class 2	Building containing 2 or more sole-occupancy units each being a separate dwelling
Class 4	Single dwelling in a Class 5, 6, 7, 8 of 9

Why Install Smoke Alarms?

- Fatalities in residential house fires are more often than not attributed to the smoke and toxic fumes produced by the fire.
- Fatalities in residential house fires generally occur at night while the occupants are asleep.
- Smoke and toxic fumes can put people into a deeper sleep reducing their capacity to wake up in the event of a fire.
- Smoke alarms will increase the occupant's chances of successfully evacuating a building in the event of fire.
- Early warning can help save your home and personal property.

Legislative Requirements

- Smoke alarms are required in all new dwellings and units.
- Smoke alarms are now also required in all existing dwellings and units (in accordance with Part 10A of the Building Regulations 1989 attached) when:
 1. the ownership is transferred, or
 2. the owner lets the dwelling or unit under a new tenancy agreement.

- Smoke alarms are required to be installed in accordance with the Building Code of Australia (BCA) as set out in Schedule 1. Every time that the smoke alarms have to be replaced they have to comply with the latest BCA.
 1. Ensure your smoke alarm is an approved smoke alarm that meets the requirements of AS 3786.
 2. Smoke alarms must be connected to the consumer mains power where consumer power is supplied to the building. Note that smoke alarms have a battery backup power supply (required by AS 3786).
 3. Where mains power is not available the alarm has to be fitted with a 10 year life battery that cannot be removed.
 4. Smoke alarms are not older than 10 years.

- If installing a smoke alarm connected to the mains power supply would involve
 1. A sufficient problem of a structural nature, or
 2. A sufficient problem of any other nature, the cause of which is not within the control of the owner.

An application can be lodged with the Shire of Murray in the form of a letter with a detailed description of the nature of the problem, a fee of \$170 and a floor plan.

Cleaning and Maintenance

The owner (as per the definition in the Residential Tenancies Act 1987, the person who makes the dwelling available for hire and the resident owner) is responsible to ensure that each alarm is in working order and has not reached its expiry date or is not more than 10 years old.

It is recommended that the smoke alarm is tested once every month, generally by holding in the button on the alarm for at least 5 seconds or check the manufacturer's guide for the testing procedure.

The backup batteries should be changed at least once a year (1 April is the designated date set by FESA).

Once a year you can clean the smoke alarm with a vacuum cleaner to remove particles that will affect the smoke alarm's performance.

Disposal of Smoke Alarms

The disposal of individual household smoke alarms to municipal rubbish tips via normal household rubbish.