



INTERPRETATIONS & PROCEDURES

FIRE PEVENTION DIVISION

SUBJECT: <p style="text-align: center;">Carbon Monoxide Detectors Requirements in Condominiums</p>		CODE SECTION(S): <p style="text-align: center;">RCW 19.27.530</p>
ISSUED BY		
NAME: <p style="text-align: center;">Ken Carlson</p>	SIGNATURE 	ISSUE DATE: <p style="text-align: center;">February 2013</p>
TITLE: <p style="text-align: center;">Fire Marshal</p>		NUMBER: <p style="text-align: center;">2013 -1</p>

ATTACHMENTS: WAC 51-54-0200

ISSUE / QUESTION: A relatively new requirement in the Washington State Building Code Act (RCW 19.27) requires carbon monoxide alarms in all buildings classified as residential occupancies beginning January 1, 2013 except owner occupied single-family residences which are exempt from the requirement until they are sold.

Some condominium owners believe that they reside in single-family residences and are therefore exempt from the requirement until they sell the unit.

DISCUSSION: The term single family residence can be used or understood differently depending on the context. Resale certificates, county records and other documents may refer to condominium units as single family residences which only serve to add to the confusion.

INTERPRETATION: With regard to carbon monoxide alarms the Washington State Legislature has made it clear which buildings carbon monoxide alarms are required in by referencing chapter 51-54 WAC.

A single-family residence as defined in chapter 51-54 WAC is a building that contains not more than two dwelling units (Group R, Division 3).

Buildings containing more than two condominium units are not single family residences; they are a Group R, Division 2 occupancy and are required to have carbon monoxide alarms beginning January 1, 2013.

"The Bellevue Fire Department exists to assist the public in the protection of life and property by minimizing the impact of fire, medical emergencies, and potential disasters or uncontrolled events that affect the community and environment."

WAC 51-54-0200 (Chapter 2 – Definitions)

RESIDENTIAL GROUP R. Residential Group R includes, among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, for sleeping purposes when not classified as an Institutional Group I or when not regulated by the International Residential Code in accordance with Section 101.2 of the International Building Code. Residential occupancies shall include the following:

R-1 Residential occupancies containing sleeping units where the occupants are primarily transient in nature, including:

Boarding houses (transient)

Hotels (transient)

Motels (transient)

Congregate living facilities (transient) with 10 or fewer occupants are permitted to comply with the construction requirements for Group R-3.

R-2 Residential occupancies containing sleeping units or more than two dwelling units where the occupants are primarily permanent in nature, including:

Apartment houses

Boarding houses (nontransient)

Boarding homes as licensed by Washington state under chapter [388-78A](#) WAC

Convents

Dormitories

Fraternities and sororities

Hotels (nontransient)

Live/work units

Motels (nontransient)

Monasteries

Residential treatment facilities as licensed by Washington state under chapter [246-337](#) WAC

Vacation timeshare properties

Congregate living facilities with sixteen or fewer occupants are permitted to comply with the construction requirements for Group R-3.

R-3 Residential occupancies where the occupants are primarily permanent in nature and not classified as Group R-1, R-2, R-4 or I, including: Buildings that do not contain more than two dwelling units. Adult care facilities that provide accommodations for five or fewer persons of any age for less than 24 hours. Child care facilities that provide accommodations for five or fewer persons of any age for less than 24 hours. Congregate living facilities with sixteen or fewer persons. Adult care within a single-family home, adult family homes and family child day care homes are permitted to comply with the *International Residential Code*.

Foster family care homes licensed by Washington state are permitted to comply with the *International Residential Code*, as an accessory use to a dwelling, for six or fewer children including those of the resident family.

R-4 classification is not adopted. Any reference in this code to R-4 does not apply.