

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTION LAW

The New York State Legislature has passed a new law that requires every existing commercial building that has appliances or equipment that may emit carbon monoxide or have an attached garage or other motor vehicle related occupancy to be equipped with carbon monoxide detecting alarms. Buildings that are classified as Storage, Utility or Miscellaneous in the NYS Building Code are exempt from complying with this rule.

The date for compliance with this new rule is June 27, 2016. Owners of existing commercial buildings are encouraged to install carbon monoxide detection as quickly as practicable.

There are specific requirements for the carbon monoxide alarms that must be met. Alarms shall be connected to the building's wiring or be powered by a 10 year life span sealed battery. Alarms must be listed to comply with Underwriters Laboratories (UL) 2034. The common residential detector does not meet the UL 2034 requirements nor do the combination smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

Appliances, equipment and devices that may emit carbon monoxide include but are not limited to the following:

- Gas or oil fired furnaces and boilers,
- Gas or oil fired water heaters,
- Space heaters with pilot lights or open flames,
- Kerosene heaters,
- Gas clothes dryers,
- Gas ovens and stoves,
- Gas unit heaters,
- All wood, coal and pellet burning stoves
- Fireplaces

In short anything that has a source of combustion is a triggering condition requiring compliance with this new rule.

The rule states that a single carbon monoxide detector be placed in a central location in an area that does not exceed a 10,000 square foot detection zone. The term "central location" means that point, in the judgement of the code enforcement officer, which maximizes the following:

- The detection of carbon monoxide,
- The notification of occupants in normally occupied areas,
- The notification of occupants prior to entering normally unoccupied areas

The term "detection zone" means a story of a commercial building and the following:

- If a story is so arranged that more than one carbon monoxide producing heating and air conditioning system is used to serve separate portions of the story then each such portion shall be deemed to be a separate detection zone,

- If a story contains a class room then each class room shall be deemed to be a separate detection zone and if any portion of that story is not a classroom that portion shall also be deemed a separate detection zone,
- Any portion of a story containing a garage or used as a garage shall not be deemed to be a detection zone.