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**Public Law Chapter 551**  
**“An Act to Amend the Law Pertaining to Smoke Detectors and Carbon Monoxide Detectors”**

**Effective March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

The following statements are designed to provide guidance with regard to Public Law Chapter 551.

**Smoke Detectors**

- Owners of a single-family dwelling built after January 1982, are to properly install smoke detectors, if not already present, in areas as designated in the manufacturers requirements.
- Owners of a single family dwelling in which a restoration or addition was made after September 19, 1985 must install smoke detectors, if they are not already present, even if it was built prior to 1982.
- Smoke detectors are to be installed in a building converted to a single-family occupancy after September 19, 1985 if they are not already present.
- A smoke detector installed within 20 feet of a bathroom or kitchen must be a photo electric type detector but smoke detectors in bedrooms may be ionization type detectors.
- Smoke detectors are to be installed in each unit of an apartment building.
- All rental units are to install smoke detectors. This includes single-family dwellings rented on a seasonal basis for a week, two weeks, a month, etc.
- In a rental unit, used as a primary residence (apartment) or seasonal rental of any duration of time, the owner must insure that the detectors are in place and operable at the beginning of the rental occupancy and make scheduled routine maintenance as befits the occupancy or upon the residents request.
- The purchaser of a single-family or multi-family dwelling(s) must certify that they shall properly install smoke detectors in the building, if not already present, within 30 days of acquisition or occupancy of the dwelling(s), which ever is later.

## Carbon Monoxide Detectors

- All rental units, including apartments and seasonally rented single-family dwellings are to install CO detectors in each area within, or giving access to, the bedrooms. This means you can put one in each bedroom or in the hallway or room in which a person travels through to reach a bedroom(s). *It is strongly recommended that no CO detector be placed in excess of 15 feet of any bedroom door.*
- At present, unless a single-family dwelling had done an addition or restoration to the dwelling adding one bedroom after September 12, 2009, or had converted another structure over to a single family dwelling after September 12, 2009, they do not have to install a carbon monoxide detector. *It is recommended that carbon monoxide detectors be installed in these occupancies.*
- The purchaser of a single-family or multi-family dwelling(s) must certify that they shall properly install carbon monoxide detectors in the building, if not already present, within 30 days of acquisition or occupancy of the dwelling(s), which ever is later. This includes single-family dwellings in which the previous owner did not have to, by law, install a carbon monoxide detector.
- Carbon monoxide detectors must be powered by the electrical service in the building by plugging them in a wall outlet or by having them hardwired in by an electrician. In either case, the detector must have a battery backup as an alternative source of power in the event the building loses electrical service.

These statements may not answer all your questions. On the next page you will find the language for PL 551 for your reference. Please feel free to contact the Fire Marshal's Office at 626-3873 if you have any further questions with regard to this new law. Thank you for helping make Maine a safer place.



### **Certification of Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms**

In accordance with 25 M.R.S.A. § 2464, subsection 10 and 25 M.R.S.A. §2468, subsection 6

I (we), \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
Buyer name (printed) Buyer name (printed)

do hereby certify that I (we) shall properly install operational smoke detector(s) and carbon monoxide detector(s), if they are not already present, in this building located at

\_\_\_\_\_ within 30 days of this closing or occupancy of  
(street address, town & zip code)

this building, whichever comes later.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Buyer Signature (date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Buyer Signature (date)