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Explanation of Smoke Alarm Requirements

The City of York requires all residential buildings to have smoke alarms. Single station, battery-powered smoke alarms are permitted. Smoke alarms are required in every sleeping area, outside of every sleeping area, and at least one per floor. When installing a smoke alarm, the kitchen should be avoided. At least one smoke alarm is required on a floor even if there are no bedrooms on the floor. While it is the responsibility of the owner to provide working smoke alarms in accordance with this code, it is the responsibility of the tenant to ensure the smoke alarms are not tampered/interfered with. It is the tenant's responsibility to ensure that smoke alarms remain in good working order, such as changing the batteries when necessary.

Examples:

A two bedroom, single floor rental unit will require three smoke alarms. One must be installed in each bedroom and one must be installed in the area immediately outside the bedrooms – most likely a hallway.

A two bedroom, two floor rental unit with one bedroom on each floor requires four smoke alarms. The first floor requires one in the bedroom and one outside the bedroom. And the second floor requires one in the bedroom and one outside the bedroom.

A house with two floors plus a basement where all three bedrooms are on the top floor will require six smoke alarms. One is required for each bedroom, one for the hallway upstairs, one for the first floor, and one for the basement.

If a bedroom takes up the entire floor of a residential unit, two smoke alarms are required. One is required in the bedroom, and one is required at the top of the stairs. If there is no wall/door separation between the bedroom and the stairs, only one smoke alarm is required on the floor.

A loft does not require a smoke alarm if it is open to the rest of the floor.

A smoke alarm must be installed in the basement of all residential properties regardless of whether or not the basement is part of a living unit. A smoke alarm installed at the top of the basement stairs is not considered to be in the basement. If the smoke alarm is installed at the top of the basement stairs, it should be relocated to the basement, or an additional one must be installed in the basement.

Explanation of CO Detector Requirements

CO detectors are required whenever there is a fossil fuel burning appliance in the building or an attached garage. A detector is required in the vicinity of the appliance and in the vicinity of all sleeping areas. The exception is a stove. A CO Detector is never required in the vicinity of a gas burning stove. Fossil fuels include wood, wood pellets, coal, fuel oil, natural gas, LP gas, kerosene, and gelled fuels.

Examples:

A gas water heater or wood burning fire place requires a CO Detector in the immediate vicinity as well as a Detector in the vicinity of all sleeping areas.

A house with only an attached garage and no other gas or wood burning appliances requires a CO Detector in the vicinity of all sleeping areas.

A house with only a gas stove requires a CO Detector in the vicinity of all sleeping areas.