

# Smoke Alarm Fact Sheet

## For Residential Rental Providers

**New legislation came into effect on 29 March 2021. Rental provider and renter responsibilities for smoke alarm safety is included in new rental agreements.**

**On or before the commencement of a rental agreement, the rental provider must provide the renter with the following information in writing:**

- how each smoke alarm in the rented premises operates
- how to test each smoke alarm in the rented premises
- the renter's obligations to not tamper with any smoke alarm and to report if a smoke alarm in the rented premises is not in working order

**The rental provider must ensure smoke alarms:**

- are correctly installed and in working order
- are tested according to the manufacturer's instructions at least once every 12 months
- have batteries replaced as required
- are repaired or replaced as an urgent repair



**Renters must:**

- give written notice to the rental provider as soon as practicable after becoming aware that a smoke alarm in the rented premises is not in working order.
- not deactivate or remove a smoke alarm or interfere with its operation in any way.



**Smoke alarms are required to be treated as an urgent repair under the Residential Tenancies Act 1997.**



## Smoke alarm power supply

Victorian Fire Services recommend installing smoke alarms with a 10-year lithium battery, so you don't need to change the battery annually. Depending on the legal requirement for your property, this battery will either be the primary power supply or the backup to a hardwired system.

### HOMES CONSTRUCTED (or significantly renovated)

Before  
1 August 1997

### MINIMUM LEGAL REQUIREMENT

Working smoke alarms. Smoke alarms powered by a 9V removable battery can be installed, however the battery needs to be replaced annually.

### VICTORIAN FIRE SERVICE RECOMMENDATIONS

Interconnected smoke alarms powered by a 10-year lithium battery in a tamperproof chamber.

After  
1 August 1997

Connected to 240v hardwired (mains power) and have a backup battery.

Interconnected hardwired smoke alarms with a 10-year lithium backup battery.

After  
1 May 2014

Connected to 240v hardwired (mains power) and have a backup battery. If multiple alarms are required, they must also be interconnected.

Additional interconnected, hardwired smoke alarms with a 10-year lithium backup battery.

## Where to install a smoke alarm

By law, at least one smoke alarm must be installed on each level of a house.

By law, smoke alarms must be installed between each sleeping area and the rest of the house.

Victorian Fire Services recommend that additional smoke alarms are installed in every bedroom and living area.

Smoke alarms should be installed on the ceiling at least 30cm from the wall.

Victorian fire services recommend smoke alarms are interconnected, so that when any alarm activates, all smoke alarms will sound.

Smoke alarms, including those attached to mains power, should be replaced after 10 years.

Smoke alarms must meet Australian Standard AS3786.



For more information please go to [consumer.vic.gov.au](http://consumer.vic.gov.au)

This flyer applies to situations which are standard homes – single or multi-story houses or town houses. There are different requirements for large multi-unit complexes which require fully integrated alarm systems and more.

