



We all know that properly functioning smoke alarms save lives.

In fact, having a working smoke alarm cuts the chances of fatalities in a reported fire in half. It's no debate that smoke alarms are extremely important when it comes to keeping you and your family safe.

In 2018, New Jersey adopted the 2015 edition of the International Fire Code and updated the Uniform Fire Code. 5:70-4.19 (c) & 5:70-4.9 (a) states "Effective January 1st, 2019 in all one and two-family homes and multiple dwellings, approved 10-year sealed battery powered single station alarms shall be installed"

The purpose of this law is simple: if the batteries are sealed in for 10 years, homeowners can't borrow them for the remote, or forget to change them on an annual basis. That means less non-functional smoke detectors and more early warnings when a fire breaks out.

This new law goes into effect 01/01/2019

There are a number of significant reasons to switch to 10-year sealed smoke alarms. Regardless of your reason, these alarms are considered to be much safer than their non-sealed counterparts by the very folks who would show up to fight a fire in your home. Not only do they help eliminate faulty alarms due to tampering, they drastically reduce the number of false alarms answered by local fire departments due to low battery alert 'chirping' sounds. The resources saved from reducing these types of 'nuisance' calls help firefighters better serve their communities.

What does this mean?

If you own or manage a residential home/condo/apartment in NJ and you have a battery only detectors (9Volt), you have to replace them with 10 year sealed battery type alarms. **DO NOT replace a hardwired detector with a battery only detector!**

Here are some FAQ's about 10-year sealed smoke alarms:

Are they more expensive than non-sealed alarms?

Up front? Yes. In the long term? No. Most 10-year sealed smoke alarms range in price from roughly \$20-\$40, making their initial investment higher than a non-sealed alarm, but non-sealed alarms require annual battery changes. The cost of these replacement batteries average \$38 over their 10-year lifespan, meaning they ultimately cost more than the sealed version.

Do they really last 10 years?

Yes! The sealed lithium battery (included) will never have to be replaced throughout the life of the alarm, giving you a decade of peace of mind even in the event of a power outage. Like all safety alarms, 10-year sealed smoke alarms should still be tested at least once each year using the button on the front of the unit to ensure they are working properly.

Will the alarm sound every time I'm cooking something?

No. There are 10-year sealed alarms designed for the kitchen with advanced sensors that can tell the difference between cooking smoke and real fire. The dangerous habit of disabling or removing smoke alarms after a nuisance alarm while cooking is a major part of why this new legislation went into effect, so alarm manufacturers considered this issue in the design of 10-year sealed alarms. You are very likely to experience fewer nuisance alarms than you did with your traditional battery alarm.

Are 10-year sealed smoke alarms better than hard-wired smoke alarms?

There are advantages to both systems. Hard-wired smoke alarms tie into your home's wiring and require professional installation, but generally do not require battery changes unless they feature a backup battery. 10-year sealed battery-only alarms are simple to install, and they work during a power failure. All smoke alarms have a lifespan of 10 years, sealed or non-sealed, and should be tested on a regular basis. When the battery wears out in a 10-year sealed alarm, the entire unit must be replaced, which helps prevent outdated units from staying in circulation. Battery back up hard-wired alarms/detectors are not affected by the new code.

What about landlords and their rental properties?

10-year sealed alarms offer security and convenience to landlords, who are legally required by New Jersey State to provide smoke detectors in their rental properties. The tamper-proof design of these alarms prevents tenants from taking the batteries out due to nuisance alarms, or to use the batteries for another purpose. The 10-year lifespan of these lithium batteries means fewer changes and fewer equipment updates. Overall, there is a lesser chance of equipment failure in the event of a fire. It's a win-win situation for both landlords and their tenants.

Does the law require 10-year sealed CO alarms?

CO detectors do not have to be 10-year sealed models unless they are part of a combo unit incorporated with a smoke alarm.