

SVOA Advisory

Date: August 10, 2016
To: Residents of Stoneybrook Village
From: SVOA Board and Stoneybrook Preparedness Committee
Subject: Smoke and Carbon Monoxide (CO) Alarms

It has come to our attention that the smoke alarms installed in our homes during construction have a maximum reliable life of 10 years, and that carbon monoxide (CO) alarms were not required nor installed at that time. The Fire Code has changed over the years to require much stricter attention to these items in new construction and could well impact sales of existing homes.

Recommended actions:

- If your house is over 8-10 years old, replace the smoke alarms with new units conforming to current codes.
 - It would be best to replace your current smoke alarms (which run on household power with battery backup and are inter-connected) with the same type of alarm. These can be purchased for \$15-\$45 each.
 - We recommend utilizing a licensed electrical contractor to install smoke alarms. Doing so assures conformance with codes, minimum installation problems and avoids hazardous climbing of ladders. The licensed contractor would typically require one to two hours per house.
- If you do not have carbon monoxide (CO) alarm coverage in your house, provide it as soon as possible. They are available as battery operated alarms, “plug-in” with battery backup alarms, or integrated in one unit with smoke alarms. Cost is \$15-\$55 each depending on type, and they are readily available at places like BiMart, Home Depot, Lowes, Amazon or from your electrician.
 - CO alarms should be installed in each bedroom or within fifteen (15) feet of each bedroom door. Note: The Oregon State Fire Marshall recommends a CO alarm in every bedroom for increased protection.
 - The alarm(s) can be placed at any height on the wall or ceiling and provide the same protection. Install per manufactures instructions
 - At least one must be provided at time of sale or if your home is used as a rental. Before that, it is highly recommended you provide one for your own protection.
- **Take Action Soon!**

References:

- “Unless otherwise recommended by the manufacturer’s published instructions, single and multiple station smoke alarms installed in one and two family dwellings shall be replaced when they fail to respond to operability test, but shall not remain in service longer than ten (10) years from the date of manufacture.” (NFPA 72-14.427)
- “A person may not convey fee title to any property that includes a dwelling unit or lodging house, or transfer possession of any dwelling unit or lodging house pursuant to a land sale contract, unless there is installed in the dwelling unit or lodging house a smoke detector or the required number of approved smoke alarms, installed in accordance with the state building code and rules of the State Fire Marshall.” (ORS 479.260)
- In 2009 Underwriters Laboratories (UL) began requiring an audible end-of-life warning to alert homeowners when their carbon monoxide (CO) alarm has reached the end of its useful life. Kidde CO alarms have a proven life of seven (7) to ten (10) years depending on model. (Kidde Company)
- “If a home has a CO source, CO alarms are required before it can be sold. Effective April 1, 2011, sellers of one or two family dwellings, manufactured dwellings, or multi-family housing containing a CO source (gas fired appliances or attached garage) must have one or more properly functioning CO alarms before conveying fee title or transferring possession of a dwelling”. (OAR 837-047-0120)
- The seller of a home can face legal action from the buyer, if the buyer incurs damages from the lack of a CO alarm. (ORS 105.840)