



Building Commission

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Part 10A – Building Regulations 1989 Battery Powered Smoke Alarms

The requirement to have smoke alarms in existing Class 1, Class 2 and Class 4 buildings that are subject to sale, lease or hire came into effect on 1 October 2009. In some circumstances, battery powered smoke alarms can be fitted instead of mains powered smoke alarms. For some of these circumstances, local government approval is needed. Advisory Notes 2009/003 and 2009/007 have been issued in relation to the smoke alarm requirements.

This Advisory Note clarifies that local government approval is not needed in the following cases:

1. Where a building is not connected to the mains power electricity supply network:

The BCA only requires mains powered smoke alarms to be installed in dwellings where consumer mains power is supplied. This means that 10-year life battery powered smoke alarms can be used in such circumstances without the need for local government approval.

2. Where there are no hidden spaces in which to run the necessary electrical wiring and there are no appropriate alternative locations for the smoke alarms:

Regulation 38N permits the installation of alarms that have a 10 year life battery that cannot be removed in lieu of mains powered smoke alarms. The responsibility for determining that a building does not have hidden spaces in which to run the necessary electrical wiring and there is no appropriate alternative location rests with the building owner and no local government approval is needed.

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