

## CHAPTER 9 FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS

### SECTION 907.2.10.1.2 IFC Interpretation No. 42-03 2003 Edition Issued: 03-31-04

**907.2.10.1.2 Groups R-2, R-3, R-4 and I-1.** Single- or multiple-station smoke alarms shall be installed and maintained in Groups R-2, R-3, R-4 and I-1 regardless of occupant load at all of the following locations:

1. On the ceiling or wall outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of bedrooms.
2. In each room used for sleeping purposes.
3. In each story within a dwelling unit, including basements but not including crawl spaces and uninhabitable attics. In dwelling units with split levels and without an intervening door between the adjacent levels, a smoke alarm installed on the upper level shall suffice for the adjacent lower level provided that the lower level is less than one full story below the upper level.

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**Q:** Do the provisions of Section 907.2.10.1.2 in the *2003 International Fire Code* require smoke alarms to be installed in all new one- and two-family dwellings?

**A:** No. The smoke alarm provisions of the *International Fire Code* are only applicable to one- and two-family dwelling buildings constructed under the *International Building Code* and classified in Group R by that code. They do not apply to detached one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses not regulated as Group R occupancies and constructed under the *International Residential Code*.

The ICC Board of Directors, in originally approving the development of the *International Residential Code*, indicated that it is to be a stand-alone code for the construction of detached one- and two-family dwellings and multiple single-family dwellings (townhouses) not more than three stories in height with a separate means of egress. All of the provisions for new construction that affect those buildings are to be regulated exclusively by the *International Residential Code* and are not to be regulated by any other International Code. Section 101.2—Scope, Exception 1 of the *International Building Code*, stipulates that “Detached one- and two-family dwellings and multiple single-family dwellings (townhouses) not more than three stories above grade ... shall comply with the *International Residential Code*”. Therefore, the construction of detached one- and two-family dwellings and multiple single-family dwellings within the scope of the *International Residential Code* is not required to comply with the provisions of either the *International Building Code* or the *International Fire Code*.

Single- and multiple-station smoke alarm provisions for buildings not regulated in occupancy Group R constructed under the *International Residential Code* are contained in Section R313 of that code and require that smoke alarms be installed in both new construction and buildings undergoing alterations, repairs or additions.

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