

GUEST POST: SMOKE AND HEAT ALARMS – ARE THEY NECESSARY?



There is a compelling case for landlords to fit interlinked smoke alarms (and heat alarms for situations where they can't be used), as leading alarm manufacturer Kidde Fyrnetics explains. In Scotland, this is already a legal requirement in all rented housing, with at least one alarm on each floor, and the UK government is considering similar measures. Registered HMOs (Houses in Multiple Occupation) also

need them to meet local authority rules.

But even where specific rules are not spelled out, legal liability still applies if suitable alarms are not installed. This is because civil law imposes a duty on landlords to ensure the safety of their tenants. For the same reason, there is a strong argument for fitting CO alarms, to protect against carbon monoxide poisoning, as well.

The current Code of Practice for domestic fire alarm systems, BS 5839-6: 2004, provides the benchmark for what a landlord should do. Although it recommends hard-wired smoke and heat alarms in most cases, battery-only units can be used where "structural fire precautions" meet current Building Regulations. But it's the landlords' responsibility to ensure that all ceilings, partitions, doors, etc., really do comply – not an easy task – otherwise, battery alarms might put tenants at risk. So, professionally installed, hard-wired alarms are the safe answer. Here, wireless interlinking technology can eliminate disruptive wiring between alarms. Find out more by downloading Kidde Fyrnetics' guide 'Fire & CO Safety in Housing' at www.smoke-alarms.co.uk

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Wednesday, December 19th, 2012

Written by Simon @ Upad Filed under [Legal](#), [Property Rental](#), [Tips for New Landlords](#) ,

ONE RESPONSE TO "GUEST POST: SMOKE AND HEAT ALARMS – ARE THEY NECESSARY?"

Bibi says:

19/12/2012 at 2:14 PM

BS 5839-6: 2004 is a great code and it is made to protect and guide the landlords and the tenants as well. Great post guys:)



Reply

Rob Hunter- London Student Group says:

Your comment is awaiting moderation.

22/12/2012 at 11:44 AM

At the London Student Group we ONLY use Kidde alarms and we always meet BS 5830-6, and in most cases, site conditions permitting greatly exceed this. With many local councils bringing in additional licensing for even smaller HMO accommodation, and in some cases (such as Newham) what amounts to landlord licensing, those standards currently regarded as "voluntary" and good practice will become prescribed by the local council concerned. There is an argument that the biggest cost to landlords is vacancy and voids. It is sensible to start a proactive (rather than reactive) programme to install mains wired alarms (and also Carbon Monoxide Alarms) as part of overall maintenance and upgrade, so that when what is now best practice becomes compulsory, you are ahead of the game. Its also a great marketing tool- a brochure showing how safe your housing is compared to the landlord down the road (especially for student groups) will pay dividends. Meeting the very best standards and being able to prove that you can do so by obtaining a certificate will also ensure that your insurance company has far less scope to wriggle out of settling any claim that may still arise if the worst happens. We have personally found Kidde to be a great supplier, and the use of their products is a sign of quality- it simply says " we dont compromise".



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Roy Cracknell: The proposal is sound in principle ,I will write more later

Murray B: Interesting title versus the content & the rhetoric – from the article I can see how, &...

Gaz: Once again the NLA shmoozes up to the hierarchy. No mention here about better protection for landlords from...

Deborah Wilson: This seems very unfair to someone in my position. I was looking to rent out my main residence as I am...



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