

New smoke alarm rules require attention of landlords and builders

Beginning January 1, 2002, new state requirements will be in effect for smoke alarms in all tenant-occupied dwellings (apartments, lodging houses or hotel rooms).

Changes included require inclusion of a hush feature in ionization smoke alarms and, if alarms are solely battery powered, they must include a ten year battery. In addition, smoke alarms need to be installed in accordance with the Oregon building code and the Oregon Administrative Rules. Also,

when a dwelling is sold, its smoke alarms must meet these same requirements.

The changes are the result of a bill (HB 2586) passed by the 1999 Legislature. The legislation is intended to address the problem of people disabling their alarms because of nuisance false alarms. It requires ionization smoke alarms to be sold with a "hush" feature, which allows the devices to be temporarily silenced for a period of not more than 15 minutes.

It is also meant to decrease

the incidence of dead batteries in smoke alarms by requiring ten-year batteries to be packaged and sold with ionization alarms. The law's long-term intent is to save lives in Oregon by phasing in these improved features smoke alarms.

This law has placed Oregon ahead of the rest of the nation in safeguarding its citizens against fire-caused injury, said State Fire Marshall Robert Garrison. The presence of a working smoke alarm doubles your chances of surviving a fire, and our law will help ensure that more Oregonians than even have that protection, according to Garrison.

Garrison offered the following safety tips:

- Place smoke alarms on every level of your home, outside each sleeping area and in every bedroom.
- Test smoke alarms monthly.
- Vacuum alarms monthly to remove dust and cobwebs.
- Replace old alarms.

Smoke alarms ten years old or older need to be replaced.

- Alarms should never be disconnected and batteries should never be removed for other uses.

OSFM (Oregon State Fire Marshall) staff is working to create awareness of the smoke alarm law change through the news media, rental property

owners and managers, real estate agents and building professionals. In addition, there is a smoke alarm information section on the OSFM website at www.sfm.state.or.us

For more information, contact the Codes and Technical Services unit at 503-373-1540, ext. 269 or the Community Education Services unit at 503-

Wu's offices are open, but mail is handled differently in both cities

Congressman David Wu today announced that his offices, in Washington, D.C., and in Portland, are open for business.

"We have slightly different scenery in Washington, D.C., but we are still working hard," said Congressman Wu.

"I encourage Oregonians to contact us with questions, comments or concerns."

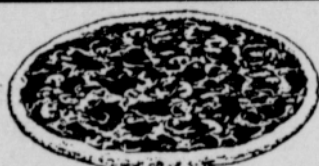
Constituents are encouraged to contact Congressman Wu by phone in Washington, D.C., at (202) 225-0855 or in

Portland at 503-326-2901.

E-mail is being accepted and can be accessed at www.house.gov/wu/ci.htm. Constituents can also fax the district office at (503) 326-5066.

Mail is not currently being delivered to the Washington, D.C. office. Constituents who sent letters to Congressman Wu's office last week are encouraged to contact him again using one of the alternate options.

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721 Madison Ave., Vernonia • 503-429-5018

Community Calendar

NOVEMBER

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VERNONIA

Alcoholics Anonymous	Mondays	6:30 p.m., Head Start Bldg.
Alcoholics Anonymous	Saturdays	7:00 p.m., Head Start Bldg.
American Legion Post #119	2nd Thursday	627 Adams Ave./ 503-429-4000
Arts & Crafts Society	2nd Thursday	2:00 p.m., City Library
Boosters	2nd Wednesday	7:30 p.m., VHS Library
Boy Scout Troop 201	Tuesdays	7:00 p.m., Head Start Bldg.
Boy Scout Troop 860	Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., LDS Church
Cemetery Beautification Comm.	2nd Thursday	7:00 p.m., Leonetti's Grill
Chamber of Commerce	2nd Wednesday	Noon, Lew's Place
Cub Scout Pack 201	Scout Cabin	For Info Call 503-429-0188
Doll Club	4th Tuesday	1:00 p.m., Senior Center
Friends of the Library	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Vernonia Library
Girl Scouts	Thursdays	6:30-8 p.m., Christian Church
Izaak Walton League	3rd Thursday	For location call 503-429-7193
Lions Club	1st & 3rd Tuesdays	6:30 p.m., Lew's Place
Nehalem Valley Car Club		For Info Call 503-429-4074
Preschool Story Hour	Mondays	10:30 a.m., City Library
Upr Nehalem Watershed Council	4th Thursday	For location call 429-2401
Vernonia Airport Committee	3rd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Vernonia Cares Directors		For location call 503-429-1414
Vernonia City Council	1st & 3rd Mondays	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Comm. Dev. Corp.	2nd Tuesday	Noon, City Hall
Vernonia Grange	2nd Friday	7:00 p.m., Grange Hall
Vernonia Health Center	2nd Thursday	6:00 p.m., 510 Bridge St.
Vernonia Planning Comm.	1st Thursday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Pride		For Info Call, 503-429-5201
Vernonia Ridge Riders	Last Thursday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Vernonia RFPD Board	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
Vernonia School Board	2nd Thursday	8:00 p.m., District Office
Vernonia Sr. Center Board	1st Friday	1:00 p.m., Senior Center
Vernonia Volunteer Firefighters	2nd Monday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
WOEC Directors	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., WOEC

MIST-BIRKENFELD

M-BRFPD Board	2nd & 4th Tuesday	7:30 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Ambulance Assoc.	1st & 2nd Thurs.	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Firefighters Assoc.	1st & 2nd Wed.	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Rescue	3rd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Helping Circle	2nd Wednesday	10:00 am, 755-2346 for info.
Natal Grange	2nd Wednesday	7:30 p.m., Grange Hall
T.O.P.S.	Sundays	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station

BANKS

Alcoholics Anonymous	Fridays	8:00 p.m., Methodist Church
Banks City Council	2nd Tuesday	7:30 p.m., City Hall
Banks Planning Commission	Last Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Banks School Board	2nd Monday	7:30 p.m., Jr. High Library
Banks Youth Group	Sundays, Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., UMC Youth Bldg.
Chamber of Commerce	1st Thursday	12:30 p.m., Brown Derby
Citizen Participation Org.	3rd Monday, odd months	7:15 p.m., City Hall
Friends of the Library	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Lions Club	1st & 3rd Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., Methodist Church
Sunset Park Assoc.	3rd Wednesday	8:00 p.m., Gun Club
T.O.P.S.	Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., Administration Bldg.
Tri-City RFPD Board	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Station 13

COLUMBIA COUNTY (All meet in St. Helens unless otherwise noted.)

Board of Commissioners	Wednesdays	10 a.m., Courthouse
Citizens for Senior Justice	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Sunset Park Church
COLCO Transportation	2nd Friday	10:30 a.m., Courthouse
County Council of Seniors	2nd Friday	1:00 p.m., Courthouse
County Fair Board	2nd Monday	7:00 p.m., Fairgrounds 4-H Bldg.
County Parks Commission	3rd Monday	6:00 p.m., 1054 Oregon St.
Emergency Comm. Dist. (9-1-1)	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Courthouse
Historical Society	4th Wednesday	Noon, location call 429-3713

Organizations and meeting dates not listed may be included by calling 429-9410 or by mail to The INDEPENDENT, 725 Bridge Street, Vernonia, OR 97064.