

Virginia Home Inspector Regulations
“Smoke Alarm Bill” SB607 Amendment
June 27, 2023

18VAC15-40-10 Definitions

C. The following words and terms when used in this chapter shall have the following meanings unless a different meaning is provided or is plainly required by the context:

"Good working order" means, with respect to a smoke alarm inspected during a home inspection, that the smoke alarm is securely attached, not physically damaged, and operation of the test function is successful.

"Smoke alarm" means (i) a single station or multiple station alarm responsive to smoke; or (ii) a "smoke detector" as used in Chapter 398 of the 2022 Acts of Assembly.

18VAC15-40-120 Home inspection contract

D. The requirements of 18VAC15-40-130 D regarding smoke alarms will not be excluded from the home inspection contract.

18VAC15-40-130 Home inspection report

B. In conducting a home inspection and reporting its findings, the home inspector, at a minimum, shall inspect the condition of and shall describe in writing the composition or characteristics of the following readily accessible components and readily observable defects, except as may be limited in the home inspection contract agreement:

6. Electrical system.

j. Presence or absence of smoke ~~detectors~~ alarms.

D. For any smoke alarms that are readily accessible in the residential building or NRS, the home inspection report must include a determination of whether the smoke alarms are in good working order as defined in 18VAC15-40-10.

1. A home inspector is not required to operate the test function of a smoke alarm if the smoke alarm is part of a central alarm system or security system in which such testing will automatically alert a fire department or other authority. To the extent the home inspector is unable to determine whether testing will cause an automatic alert, the home inspector is not required to operate the test function of the smoke alarm.

2. If a smoke alarm is not readily accessible or there are any limitations in determining whether it is in good working order, the home inspection report must state that it is not readily accessible or describe such limitations, as applicable.

3. The home inspection report must include the substance of the following: It is recommended that a home have smoke alarms on each level of the dwelling and in every bedroom or sleeping area. Clients should replace any existing smoke alarms that are not in good working order with new ones and install smoke alarms where they may be missing or not properly located. Any test of a smoke alarm during a home inspection only reflects its condition at the time of inspection and is not a guarantee, warranty, or any form of insurance. A test performed during the home inspection does not supersede the smoke alarm manufacturer's testing recommendations. Clients should follow the manufacturer's instructions for proper placement, installation, and maintenance.