Smoke Alarms required in dwellings units. (CRC Section R314)

Alterations/Repair/Additions
Smoke alarms required since January 1, 1985 (CRC Section R314.8.2.a.1)

Existing dwellings
Smoke alarms required since January 1, 1987 (CRC Section R314.8.2.a.2)

Smoke alarms² shall be installed in each sleeping room, outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedroom(s), and on each story including basements and habitable attics. (CRC Section R314.3)

Power source and interconnection requirements for smoke alarms²

New construction
Smoke alarms require power from building wiring and interconnection (CRC Sections R314.4 and R314.6)

Existing dwellings when alterations, repairs or additions requiring a permit occur, or when one or more sleeping rooms are created/added
Smoke alarms require power from building wiring³ and interconnection⁴ (CRC Sections R314.4 and R314.6)

Existing dwellings – installation, repairs, or alterations of: roofing, siding, windows, doors, porch or deck; OR installation, alteration or repairs of electrical, mechanical or plumbing systems with no removal of wall and ceiling finishes
Smoke alarms are permitted to be solely battery operated. (CRC Section R314.6 exc. 3)

Existing dwellings not requiring a permit (no construction taking place)
Smoke alarms are permitted to be solely battery operated. (CRC Section R314.6 exc.1)

1. Buildings that contain one or two dwelling units, townhouses, congregate residences with 16 or fewer persons.
2. Smoke alarms shall be listed in accordance with UL 217 and installed in accordance with the provisions of CRC and NFPA 72.
3. Since knob-and-tube wiring does not have an equipment grounding conductor and has a much lower insulation heat range than newer wiring types, existing buildings equipped with knob-and-tube wiring may have solely battery powered smoke alarms.
4. Hardwiring and interconnection is not required in existing dwelling units where:
   A. No construction is taking place
   B. Repairs do not result in the removal of wall or ceiling finishes, unless there is an attic⁵, crawlspace²⁶ or basement available which could provide access for wiring³ and interconnection³ without the removal of interior finishes
   C. Repairs or alterations are limited to exterior surfaces
   D. Work is limited to the installation, alteration or repair of plumbing, mechanical, or electrical systems, which do not result in the removal of interior wall or ceiling finishes exposing the structure.
5. For attic or crawlspace to be considered accessible it must have an access opening (18”x24” min. at crawlspace; 22”x30” min. at attic) and 30” minimum vertical clearance at all locations where wiring is installed.