
Local Government & Housing Committee

SSB 5561

Brief Description: Requiring the building code council to adopt rules that require certain buildings to be equipped with carbon monoxide alarms.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce & Consumer Protection (originally sponsored by Senators Kline, Fairley and Kohl-Welles).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the State Building Code Council (Council) to adopt rules requiring carbon monoxide alarms in residential occupancies.
- Specifies that these rules must require carbon monoxide alarms in new buildings beginning in 2011, and in existing structures beginning in 2013.
- Allows the Council to exempt certain buildings.

Hearing Date: 3/18/09

Staff: Sara del Moral (786-7291) and Thamas Osborn (786-7129)

Background:

State Building Code Council.

The State Building Code Council (Council) provides independent analysis and objective advice to the Legislature and the Office of the Governor on state building code issues. The Council establishes the minimum building, mechanical, fire, plumbing, and energy code requirements necessary to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the people of the state of Washington, by reviewing, developing, and adopting the state building code.

Buildings Classified as Residential Occupancies.

Residential occupancies, as defined in the administrative rules, fall into the following categories:

- those where occupants are primarily transient, such as boarding houses and hotels;

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- those containing sleeping units or at least two dwelling units. Examples include:
 - apartment buildings;
 - convents; and
 - vacation timeshare properties;
- detached houses, duplexes, and townhomes; and
- adult and child care facilities located in homes.

Smoke Detector Requirements.

State law requires that building owners install smoke detectors in all buildings occupied by residents other than the owner, as well as all buildings built after 1980. Tenants are responsible for replacing batteries and maintaining smoke detectors.

After a vacancy, landlords must ensure that smoke detectors are in working order before new tenants move in.

Summary of Bill:

By July 1, 2010, the Council must adopt rules requiring all residential occupancies, with certain exceptions, to be equipped with carbon monoxide alarms. These rules must require that:

- all newly constructed residential occupancies have carbon monoxide alarms beginning January 1, 2011;
- all other residential occupancies have carbon monoxide alarms beginning January 1, 2013; and
- tenants maintain carbon monoxide alarms according to manufacturer specifications, including battery replacement.

Additionally, the rules must consider applicable nationally accepted standards.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.