

Fire and Smoke Alarm systems for people with deafness or hearing loss

Monday 15 November 2021

Information

One in five of the Scottish population have a deafness or hearing loss and many of them may not be awoken by a conventional fire and smoke alarm system in their home due to their hearing loss. Deafness or hearing loss refers to people who are deaf, deafblind, deafened or hard of hearing. Everyone deserves to feel safe in any home.

This information applies to fire and smoke alarm systems designed for use in private and social housing and is for homeowners, tenants (private) and tenants (housing association and local authority).

It's vital that every home in Scotland have fire and smoke alarm systems fitted, to alert people to any potential danger.

There are many different fire and smoke alarm systems available for people with deafness or hearing loss, some feature high intensity flashing strobe lights, vibrating pads or vibrating pager alerts, which will alert you should there be a fire.

There are many local organisations or arrangements with local authorities across Scotland, to assist with providing fire and smoke alarm systems for people who have a deafness or hearing loss. You can contact your local Care and Repair service, community fire station or your local authority for more information.

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Why have a fire and smoke alarm system in your home?

From February 2022, the law is changing in Scotland, which requires all home to have interlinked smoke and heat alarm systems.

If you are worried about the impact that not making these changes will have on your home insurance, please speak to your insurer.

Changes to the law via the Scottish Government website at link below (last updated September 2021):

[Fire and smoke alarms: changes to the law - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/consultation-papers/collections/documents/20210922-fire-and-smoke-alarm-standards-changes-to-the-law.pdf)

For film clips, with BSL (British Sign Language) and subtitles (captions), please see links below:

Scottish Government new Fire Alarms Standards advert, includes voice-over (30 seconds; August 2021)

[https://youtu.be/ I0fgET7-2k](https://youtu.be/I0fgET7-2k)

Scottish Government Fire Alarms leaflet (nine minutes; August 2021)

<https://youtu.be/aXQ9fOfcK9s>

What does this mean?

Every home in Scotland must have interlinked fire and smoke alarms by February 2022. These can be either mains-wired or tamper-proof battery alarms. Being interlinked means if one alarm goes off, they all go off. You may not always hear the alarm closest to the fire, especially if you're somewhere else in the house or asleep. The legislation is intended to improve fire safety and an interlinked system will alert you immediately.

If an existing fire and smoke alarm system is not interlinked, or doesn't have alarms in all the prescribed areas, then additional **standard** fire and smoke alarms are required to meet the new rules. New tamper-proof battery and existing mains-wired fire and smoke alarms can be interlinked if they are compatible with a radio link in the additional alarms.

The legislation does not apply to specialist fire and smoke alarms.

The legislation does not require removal or replacement of existing **specialist** fire and smoke alarms e.g., alarms that feature high intensity flashing strobe lights and wired vibration pillow pads. If someone has an existing **specialist** fire and smoke alarm, they may want the required

additional **standard** fire and smoke alarms to connect to it. There are companies which manufacture compatible specialist accessories already available e.g., Fire Angel and Aico, and these standard interlinked fire and smoke systems may also be compatible with existing specialist fire and smoke alarms, depending on the type of installation. Currently, the standard fire and smoke alarms available through Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) cannot be connected to an existing specialist fire and smoke alarm.

If you need additional standard fire and smoke alarms to meet the new standard, it is important to choose ones that will work with your existing specialist fire and smoke alarms. This will avoid having to have two separate systems and ensure that you are protected.

You can contact your local Health and Social Care Partnership Sensory Loss / Impairment services or equipment services, who should be able to advise you. They may also be able to help if you do not already have fire and smoke alarms and need specialist equipment and can assess your needs in order to provide suitable products.

Please see information for homeowners, tenants (private), tenants (housing association and local authority) and fire safety for new build homes at link below (last updated October 2021):

[Make sure your home is fire safe - mygov.scot](#)

Help with costs

For tenants, financial responsibility for installing standard and specialist fire and smoke alarms lies with the local authority or the private landlord.

Under the Equality Act, tenants (both social and private renting) can ask their landlord to make certain changes to the property that are needed to avoid the disabled person being at a disadvantage, and appropriate fire and smoke alarms for people who have a deafness or hearing loss fits into that category.

Private homeowners on low incomes who are older or disabled may be able to get help with costs by contacting their local service at link below:

[Care and Repair service](#)

For further information go to link below (last updated September 2021):

[Fire and smoke alarms: changes to the law - gov.scot](#)
[\(www.gov.scot\)](#)

Where to buy a fire and smoke alarm system?

There are many suppliers and manufacturers that you can get in touch with directly at the links shown below:

RNID Connevens

www.RNIDconnevens.co.uk

FireBlitz

www.fireblitz.co.uk

Fireco

www.fireco.uk

Safe Fire Direct

www.safefiredirect.co.uk

Wireless Alert Solutions

www.wasol.co.uk

Safelincs Ltd

www.safelincs.co.uk

MDH Wireless

www.mdh-uk.co.uk

For further information

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will only install standard fire and smoke alarms in the homes of people assessed to be at high risk from fire as part of a home fire safety visit.

Carbon monoxide detectors will continue to be required, if you have gas appliances such as boiler or gas cooker in your home.

For advice on fire safety or to request a Home Fire Safety Visit, please contact The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service on 0800 0731 999, BSL users can contact via Contact Scotland BSL or visit the website at link below:

[Scottish Fire and Rescue service website](#)

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