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CODE/ EDITION: International Building Code 2006 (IBC),
International Residential Code 2006 (IRC)

SUBJECT: Residential Smoke Detectors

DISCUSSION:

In dwelling units, congregate residences and hotel or lodging house guest rooms that are used for sleeping purposes shall be provided with smoke detectors. Detectors shall be installed in accordance with the approved manufacturer's instructions and required smoke detectors shall receive their primary power from the building wiring when such wiring is served from a commercial source and shall be equipped with a battery backup.

Due to industry changes regarding Fire Alarm systems, including smoke detection, the following code changes which provide alternatives to the current code requirements are now in effect.

CODE DEFINITION:

Deleted:

~~R313.1 Smoke detection and notification. All smoke alarms shall be listed in accordance with UL 217 and installed in accordance with the provisions of this code and the household fire warning equipment provisions of NFPA 72.~~

~~Household fire alarm systems installed in accordance with NFPA 72 that include smoke alarms, or a combination of smoke detector and audible notification device installed as required by this section for smoke alarms, shall be permitted. The household fire alarm system shall provide the same level of smoke detection and alarm as required by this section for smoke alarms in the event the fire alarm panel is removed or the system is not connected to a central station.~~

Replaced:

R313.1 Fire alarm systems. Fire alarm systems shall be permitted to be used in lieu of smoke alarms and shall comply with Sections R313.1.1 through R313.1.2

Added:

R313.1.1 General. Fire alarm systems shall comply with the provisions of this code and the household fire warning *equipment* provisions of NFPA 72. Smoke detectors shall be *listed* in accordance with UL 268.

R313.1.2 Combination detectors. Combination smoke and carbon monoxide detectors shall be permitted to be installed in fire alarm systems in lieu of smoke detectors, provided that they are *listed* in accordance with UL 268 and UL 2075

Comments:

This added language is to expand and encourage the use of combined smoke and carbon monoxide detectors as consistent with the 2018 IRC.

CODE SUMMARY:

In April 2016, UL announced an industry file review (IFR) for all smoke alarms and smoke detectors to address more than 350 technical changes manufacturers must make to their products to maintain their UL listing (certification). An IFR involves revisions to standards that are often necessary to keep up with innovations in technology, reflect changes in industry practices or to address new or emerging safety issues.

UL 268 differs from the UL 217 standard as the battery backup needn't be located in a self-contained single smoke alarm as is currently required. These systems are not intended to be used together however both systems will be required to be interconnected and receive their primary power from the building wiring when such wiring is served from a commercial source.

REFERENCE

- a) National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code, NFPA 72.