

**STATE OF WASHINGTON**

**STATE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL**

**15-013**

# State Building Code to be Amended:

International Building Code State Energy Code

ICC ANSI A117.1 Accessibility Code International Mechanical Code International Existing Building Code International Fuel Gas Code International Residential Code NFPA 54 National Fuel Gas Code

International Fire Code NFPA 58 Liquefied Petroleum Gas Code

Uniform Plumbing Code Wildland Urban Interface Code

# Section: New Section 907.2.9.4 in the 2015 IFC Page: 124 Title: Group R-2 automatic smoke detection system

1. **Proponent Name (Specific local government, organization or individual): Proponent: Department of Health: Construction Review Services Title:**

**Date: 2/2015**

1. **Designated Contact Person: Name: Mina Zarelli Title: Senior Plans Reviewer**

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# Proposed Code Amendment.

**Code(s)** \_IFC, IBC

# Section(s)

907.2.9.4

# Add new section to read as follows:

**907.2.9.4 Group R-2 assisted living facilities.**

An automatic smoke detection system that activates the occupant notification system in accordance with Section 907.5 shall be installed in corridors, waiting areas open to corridors and habitable spaces other than sleeping units and kitchens located in Group R-2 assisted living facilities licensed by the state of Washington.

# Exceptions:

1. Smoke detection is not required for exterior balconies.
2. Occupant notification systems are not required to be activated where private mode signaling installed in accordance with NFPA 72 is approved by the fire code official and staff evacuation responsibilities are included in the fire safety and evacuation plan required by Section 404.

# Briefly explain your proposed amendment, including the purpose, benefits and problems addressed.

Licensed assisted living facilities more closely match the description of Institutional Group I-1 Condition 2; therefore revisions should be made to provide for adequate fire protection to protect those occupants. The residents receive custodial care and require limited verbal or physical assistance to complete building evacuation during an emergency. Some of the residents may not be capable of self- preservation.

The proposal requires an automatic smoke detection system to be installed in most areas of the building except for the sleeping units and kitchens. Those rooms would require a smoke alarm.

It would impact buildings designed with minimal fire protection systems more suitable for independent living situations like apartments and hotels. Depending on the building’s features, other building code sections can trigger requirements for the detection of smoke by various devices, such as door hold-opens in rated walls and staff notification. By requiring automatic smoke detection similar to what is required by Group I-1 Condition 2, we are ensuring that the facility is adequately protected and staff is notified quickly when smoke is detected.

The second exception allows for private mode signaling as allowed in Group I occupancies in the 2015 IFC. In certain residential care environments, occupants can become very distraught and the activation of fire alarm systems often creates difficult situations for staff to execute their fire safety and evacuation plans.

1. **Specify what criteria this proposal meets.** You may select more than one. The amendment is needed to address a critical life/safety need.

The amendment is needed to address a specific state policy or statute.

The amendment is needed for consistency with state or federal regulations.

The amendment is needed to address a unique character of the state: Washington uses a modified R-2 occupancy for licensed assisted living facilities.

The amendment corrects errors and omissions.

1. **Is there an economic impact:** Yes No Explain:

The proposal would impact buildings designed with minimal fire protection systems more suitable for independent living situations like apartments and hotels. In many cases, a smoke detection system is already installed in assisted living facilities.

The additional costs to a building as a result of this proposal are very small. We reviewed one project currently under construction to determine the additional costs. For this new 35 bed assisted living facility addition with total construction costs of $2.5 million the costs to add a smoke detection system would be about $4,000. That’s 0.16% of the overall construction cost.

Assisted living facilities are required to have a fire sprinkler system and stand-alone smoke alarms in the resident rooms. There is little additional cost for enforcement and operations/maintenance when an automatic smoke detection system is added because the facilities are already required to have other fire protection systems in place. There may be a savings if the facilities chose to go beyond the minimum requirements of this proposal and add the resident rooms to the smoke detection system, instead of the stand-alone smoke alarms.

Please send your completed proposal to: [sbcc@ga.wa.gov](mailto:sbcc@ga.wa.gov)

All questions must be answered to be considered complete. Incomplete proposals will not be accepted.