



Home Fire Alarm Devices: Check the Number and Placement

Description

SCDF requires at least one Home Fire Alarm Device along the circulation area or escape route in a single-storey home. Multi-storey homes need at least one per storey, and a storey with more than 70 square metres of circulation area needs at least two.

This guide is written for a homeowner or resident checking smoke-alarm coverage. It resolves a specific job: select compliant HFAD features and map the minimum number and location for the home. Start with the branch that matches the facts, then keep the supporting record until the transaction, visit, filing or safety task is complete.

Choose the branch before acting

Your situation	Next move
Single-storey flat, apartment or landed home	Install at least one detector along the circulation area or escape route
Multi-storey home	Install at least one per storey and check the 70 sqm circulation-area threshold
Two or more detectors are installed	Use interconnected devices as required by the code
Existing home has no qualifying fire-safety works	Installation may not be mandatory, but SCDF strongly encourages it

Do not combine branches merely because two labels sound similar. The correct branch depends on the actual person, date, property, product, service or location involved. If one fact is unknown, pause at that row and verify it instead of carrying an assumption into the rest of the task.

Start with the home layout

A detector hidden in a bedroom corner does not necessarily protect the route used to escape. The current position is set out by [SCDF Home Fire Alarm Device page](#).

Sketch the living room, corridor, stairs and exits before choosing locations. Add the relevant date, document, amount, location or responsible person to the same record. That makes the choice reproducible and prevents a broad rule from being applied to the wrong facts.

Count by storey

SCDF's table distinguishes single and multi-storey homes and adds a higher count for large circulation areas. The supporting detail is available from [SCDF Fire Code clause 6.3.6](#).

Record the area basis and detector count on the layout. Add the relevant date, document, amount, location or responsible person to the same record. That makes the choice reproducible and prevents a broad rule from being applied to the wrong facts.

Prefer smoke detection

SCDF says smoke detection provides earlier warning than heat detection for primary home protection.

Choose a listed device with smoke capability unless a qualified fire-safety design says otherwise. Add the relevant date, document, amount, location or responsible person to the same record. That makes the choice reproducible and prevents a broad rule from being applied to the wrong facts.

Check required features

The code lists status lights, silence or reset, test button, low-battery alert and accepted standards.

Photograph the model and certification label and retain the manual. Add the relevant date, document, amount, location or responsible person to the same record. That makes the choice reproducible and prevents a broad rule from being applied to the wrong facts.

Interconnect multiple devices

When one alarm detects smoke, occupants elsewhere need the warning too.

Test that all interconnected alarms sound rather than testing units in isolation. Add the relevant date, document, amount, location or responsible person to the same record. That makes the choice reproducible and prevents a broad rule from being applied to the wrong facts.

Plan a monthly routine

A ten-year built-in battery does not remove the need to test the alarm or respond to fault indications.

Put a recurring test date on the household calendar and log any replacement. Add the relevant date, document, amount, location or responsible person to the same record. That makes the choice reproducible and prevents a broad rule from being applied to the wrong facts.

Treat an alarm as an evacuation prompt

An HFAD warns occupants; it does not put out a fire or guarantee a safe route.

Leave, call 995 from safety and use an extinguisher only if trained and conditions are safe. Add the relevant date, document, amount, location or responsible person to the same record. That makes the choice reproducible and prevents a broad rule from being applied to the wrong facts.

Worked example

A two-storey maisonette with normal circulation areas needs at least one detector per storey under the table. If an upper-storey circulation area exceeds 70 sqm, that storey needs at least two. A competent installer should confirm exact locations.

The example is a calculation or planning model, not a promise about an individual outcome. Replace every example input with the live figure, document, route condition or case fact. Keep intermediate workings, because rounding too early or skipping one stage can produce an answer that looks plausible but cannot be checked.

Build one usable decision file

Create a short record with four columns: fact, evidence, effect on the decision and next owner. Put the controlling rule beside the particular fact it governs. A page about the right subject is not enough if it does not contain the number, deadline, eligibility test or operational detail used in the decision.

Save a dated copy or acknowledgement when the task is time-sensitive. If another person needs to continue the work, they should be able to see what was checked, what remains uncertain and which official channel can resolve it. This is especially important where contracts, money, employment, safety or personal data are involved.

Final check

1. Sketch each storey and escape route
2. Calculate the minimum detector count
3. Check smoke capability and certification
4. Confirm required features
5. Interconnect multiple units
6. Test and record results monthly
7. Replace a failed or end-of-life device promptly

SCDF's current Fire Code and any approved fire-safety plans control. Contact SCDF or a competent professional for additions and alterations.

Related LBRD guides

You may also need to [verify a fire-safety seller before paying](#). For the next adjacent task, [separate physical safety from insurance protection](#).

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