

Updated: August 20, 2025

Landlord & Tenant Responsibilities (Maine Law)

- At each new occupancy, landlord provides working smoke and CO alarms in required locations; repairs/replaces after written notice of defect.
- Tenants must test, keep batteries charged (where applicable), and not disable alarms.
- Penalties may apply for violations; many jurisdictions offer a short correction window - verify with your AHJ.

Required Placement (Smoke & CO)

- Smoke: Alarms in each dwelling unit; if a smoke alarm is within 20 ft of a kitchen or a bathroom with tub/shower, it must be photoelectric. Ionization permitted inside bedrooms.
- CO: At least one CO alarm in each area within, or giving access to, bedrooms (and as otherwise required by statute/AHJ).
- Each level of the dwelling unit (including basements) typically requires smoke alarms; common corridors in multi-story buildings may require additional devices - confirm locally.

Power Types for CO Alarms

- In many multifamily/covered occupancies, CO alarms may be AC with battery backup, sealed 10-year battery, or certain listed battery devices (e.g., low-power RF; connected to a panel).
- For single-family additions/conversions and many new-build situations, CO alarms typically must be AC + battery. Always verify with your AHJ and statute.

Multifamily & Common Areas

- Multi-apartment buildings over three stories: smoke alarms in corridors/hallways on each floor may be required.
- Owners should expect alarms on each level and in/near bedrooms for local rental inspections; confirm current city checklists (e.g., Portland).

Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing Accessibility

Upon request, provide approved smoke and approved CO alarms suitable for deaf/hard-of-hearing occupants; if not provided, tenants may procure and deduct cost as permitted by statute.

Documentation & Recordkeeping

- Life-safety binder: device inventory, receipts/installation dates, battery replacement dates, inspection tags/stickers, central-station signal logs (if monitored).
- Move-in/move-out checklists showing alarms tested and working at each occupancy.
- Project documents: NFPA 72 Record of Completion for acceptance; System Record of Inspection & Testing for periodic service; any local permits/approvals.

Common Deficiencies (and How to Avoid Them)

- Wrong type near kitchens/baths - within 20 ft must be photoelectric.
- Dead/expired batteries or end-of-life devices (smoke ~10 yrs; many CO sensors 5-7 yrs).
- Missing devices on certain levels/bedroom areas; inaccessible/blocked alarms.
- CO power type not compliant for additions/conversions or new work (AC + backup).

Portland, ME Notes

Cunningham Security

Maine Landlord Smoke & CO Rules Cheat Sheet (NFPA 72) - www.cunninghamsecurity.com | (207) 846-3350 - info@cunninghamsecurity.com

Rental safety materials emphasize UL/FM-listed alarms; working smoke alarms on each level and in/near bedrooms; CO alarms on each level. Verify current city forms before inspection.

Disclaimer: This cheat sheet is informational and not legal advice. Always confirm current code and local ordinances with your AHJ.

Need help? We can install, label, inspect, and document for pass-first visits - (207) 846-3350 - info@cunninghamsecurity.com - www.cunninghamsecurity.com