



Nebraska Strengthens carbon Monoxide Protection With New Legislation (First Alert)

November 30, 2016

Effective January 1, All Homes Must Install CO Alarms

(Aurora, Ill.) November 30, 2016 – Nebraska is taking a step forward in stopping a silent killer with new legislation effective Jan. 1, 2017. The Carbon Monoxide Safety Act (Legislative Bill 34) will require that carbon monoxide (CO) alarm devices be installed in all new and existing homes and apartments.

At that time, all residential dwellings state-wide, including single- and multi-family housing and apartments, must be equipped with the proper number of CO alarms. This includes rental properties once a new tenant takes possession of the dwelling. The effective date coincides with National Carbon Monoxide Awareness Month, observed every January to raise awareness for the winter spike in CO incidents.

“Carbon monoxide is a poisonous – and potentially fatal – gas that can only be detected by specially designed sensing devices,” said Tom Russo, vice president of marketing for First Alert, the most trusted name in home safety.* “The new legislation will help put an end to the tragic incidents that occur each year as a result of undetected carbon monoxide.”

Known as the “silent killer,” CO poisoning is the number one cause of accidental poisoning in the United States – responsible for an average of 450 deaths and more than 20,000 emergency room visits each year according to the Journal of the American Medical Association. CO poisoning is notoriously difficult to diagnose – often until it’s too late. The symptoms mimic those of many other illnesses and include nausea, headaches, dizziness, weakness, chest pain and vomiting. In more severe poisoning cases, people may experience disorientation or unconsciousness, or suffer long-term neurological disabilities, cardiorespiratory failure or death.

Under the new law, CO alarms must be located outside of each separate sleeping area, in the immediate vicinity of the bedroom. However, safety experts like the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommend that CO alarms also be installed on each level of the home, including the basement. Local building code officials will verify compliance with the law when approving permit requests for new construction and most alterations, repairs or additions to dwellings.

The NFPA also recommends replacing alarms once they reach the end of the manufacturer’s suggested useful life or expiration date. The last few years have seen significant advancements in technology, extending the lifespans of CO alarms to at least seven years, and select models are tested to last 10 years. For building owners who already have alarms, but may not know their age or condition, this new legislation serves as a reminder to update their properties accordingly.

“The Carbon Monoxide Safety Act is a vital step in bringing strengthened CO protection to consumers throughout Nebraska,” Russo added. “But installing CO alarms is only half of the story – conducting ongoing alarm maintenance, including replacing expired alarms and checking batteries, is necessary to maintain a family’s level of protection.”

CO sources may include, but are not limited to, heaters, fireplaces, furnaces, appliances or cooking sources using coal, wood, petroleum products or other fuels emitting CO as a by-product of combustion. Attached garages with doors, ductwork or ventilation shafts connected to a living space also are sources of CO.

For more detail on Nebraska’s CO alarm requirements, view Legislative Bill 34 here:
<http://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/Current/PDF/Slip/LB34.pdf>.

For additional information on carbon monoxide safety, as well as a complete home safety checklist, visit
http://www.firstalert.com/safety_checklist.php.

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**First Alert Brand Trust Survey, January 2016 – Results are based on the responses of 1,004 adults, ages 18 and older, living in the United States who completed a telephone survey, January 28-31, 2016. Results are accurate to +/- 3 percentage points with a 95 percent confidence level and can be generalized to the entire adult population in the United States within those statistical parameters. For more information or a copy of the complete survey and results, contact Tim Young at LCWA: 312/565-4628 or tyoung@lcwa.com.*

About BRK Brands, Inc.

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