
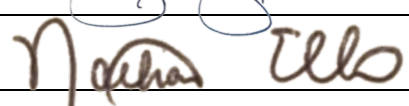




OSFM  
INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN

<b>NUMBER:</b>	18-2001	
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>	April 2, 2018	Revision June 14, 2018
<b>FROM:</b>	Shawn Stickle, Chief Deputy State Fire Marshal 	
<b>APPROVED:</b>	Nathan Ellis, Assistant State Fire Marshal 	
<b>SECTION:</b>	Code Enforcement	
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	South Carolina Code of Regulations – R.71-8301.3 All Foster Home Facilities	

**I. Objective:**

- A. To provide Deputy State Fire Marshals with guidance and clarification on R.71-8301.3 for consistent application statewide.

**II. Contents**

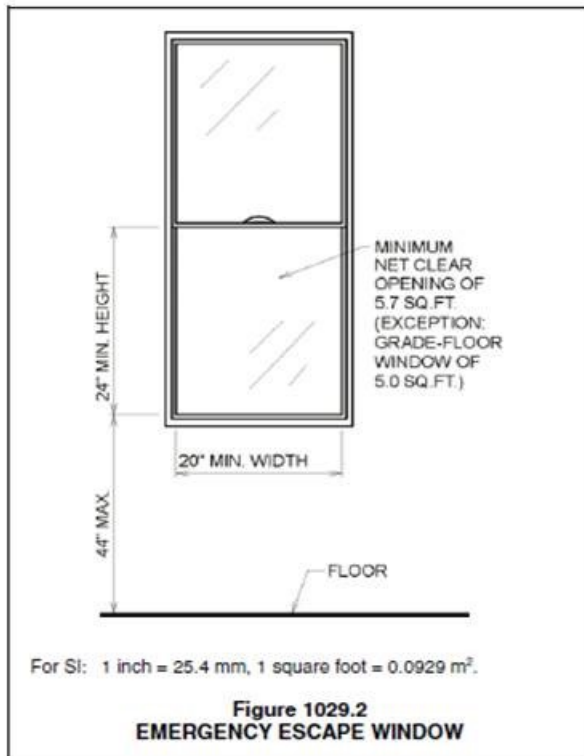
**A. Fire Safety**

1. Approved address numbers shall be placed in a position that is plainly legible and visible from the street.
  - a. Address number shall be a minimum of 4 inches high with a minimum stroke width of 0.5 inch and shall contrast with their background.
2. Foster Home shall be designed and constructed with the intent to be used as a dwelling.
3. One (1) portable fire extinguisher with a minimum classification of 2A:10BC shall be readily accessible and installed near cooking areas on your way to an exit outside.
  - a. Fire extinguishers shall be visually inspected monthly to ensure the needle is in the green.
  - b. Annual maintenance is not required for foster homes, however, extinguishers shall be replaced or serviced by a fire equipment dealer every 6 years from the manufacture date.
4. All egress doors and pathways shall not be obstructed, diminished, reduced, or require special knowledge, effort or a key to exit. No more than three actions, including opening the door, are permitted. (e.g. **1.** Unlock deadbolt. **2.** Unlock door knob. **3.** Turn door knob and open the door.)
  - a. Dual Cylinder locks are not permitted (lock requires a key to lock and unlock on the inside).
  - b. Doors are permitted to be equipped with a night latch, dead bolt or security chain, provided such devices are openable from the inside without the use of a key or tool, however, shall be installed no higher than 48” inches and it requires no more than three total actions.

5. Each sleeping room shall have an operable door that closes and latches to provide compartmentation that protects occupants in case of a fire event. \*A residential automatic fire sprinkler system will be considered an alternate method to compartmentation requirements.
  - a. Doors shall be positive latching (self-latch when pushed closed and require an action to unlatch/open) that resist not less than 5 pounds of force. Roller latches are prohibited.
  - b. Bedroom walls shall terminate at the ceiling, without unprotected openings, or lofts.
  - c. Barn Doors will be permitted if the following requirements are met:
    - i. The barn door edges shall overlap the opening at least four inches on the sides, top, and bottom if applicable.
    - ii. The latching mechanism, shall be hardware that is manufactured for the purpose of latching sliding barn doors in place. Homemade solutions for latches, such as hook and eye or staple hasp latches, are not permitted.

\*Note: For information on installation of residential fire sprinklers please visit:  
<https://scfirefighters.org/resources/fire-sprinklers/>

6. All sleeping rooms below the fourth story shall have operable emergency escape and rescue openings that open from the inside. Emergency and escape rescue openings shall meet the dimensions illustrated below and have a net clear opening of not less than 5.7 square feet. Exception: Grade floor is permitted to be 5.0 square feet. Foster homes that do not comply with minimum dimensions\* of emergency escape and rescue opening shall have either smoke alarms interconnected in such a manner that the activation of one alarm will activate all of the alarms in the dwelling unit, or a have a residential automatic fire sprinkler system installed. Regardless, at the Deputy's discretion, openings are still be required to allow an average size adult to escape.



**Equation:** (Length x Width) ÷ 144

**Example:** (20" x 24") = 480 ÷ 144  
= 3.33 Square feet

**Note:** The example shown does NOT meet the minimum area required, though it does meet the minimum dimensions. Thus, interconnected smoke alarms or a residential automatic fire sprinkler system are required.

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All Foster Home Facilities

- a. **Below Grade:** Where the sill height is below grade, it shall be provided with a window well with the horizontal area of the window well shall be not less than 9 square feet with a horizontal projection and width of not less than 36 inches. The area of the window well shall allow the emergency escape and rescue opening to be fully opened. The ladder or steps required shall be permitted to encroach not more than 6 inches into the required dimensions of the window well. Nothing shall obstruct these openings.
7. Listed smoke alarms shall be installed on the ceiling or wall outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of bedrooms (within 21 feet per NFPA 72), in each room used for sleeping purposes, and on each habitable story within a dwelling (including basements).
- a. Smoke alarms expire based on the manufacture’s guidelines or 10 years from the date of manufacture, whichever is less, and shall be installed per illustrations below.
  - b. Hardwired and/or interconnected alarms are required to be maintained if installed per illustrations below.
  - c. Homes without hardwired interconnected alarms shall be provided with a sealed 10-year life battery if emergency escape and rescue openings meet minimum size and dimensions.
    - i. If emergency escape and rescue openings do not meet minimum size requirements, listed wireless interconnected smoke alarms shall be installed.
    - ii. If the home is provided with hardwired in the common areas and installed properly, a wireless “bridge” unit shall be installed to communicate with wireless alarms in the bedrooms.
  - d. Fire Alarm Systems need to comply with regulations and NFPA 72, and may only be approved by a supervisor.

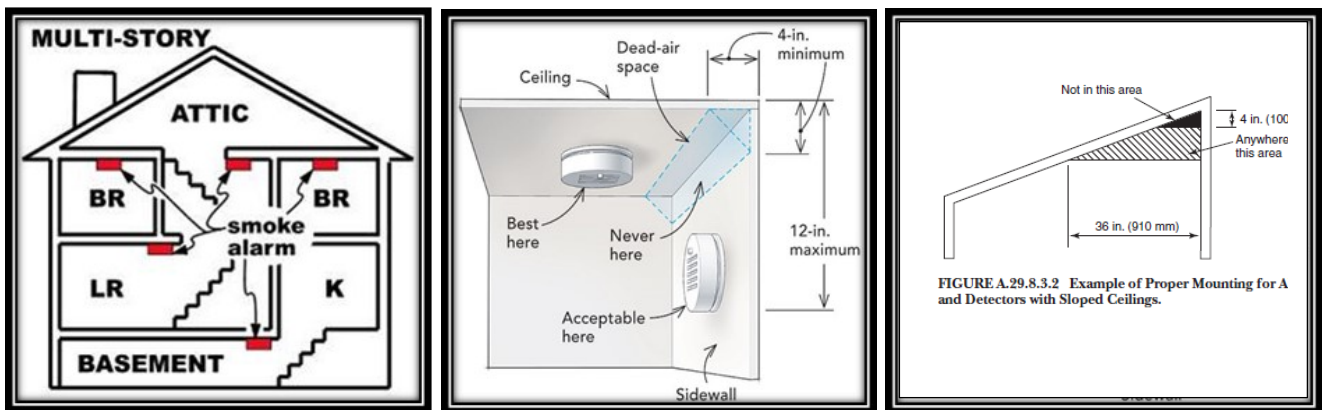
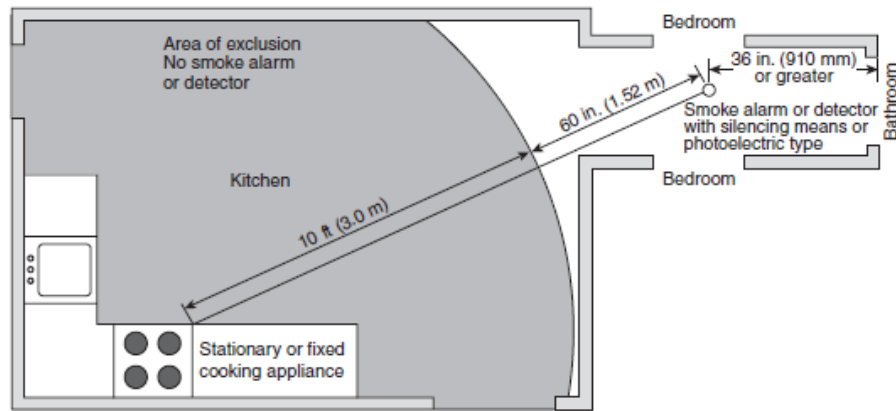


FIGURE A.29.8.3.2 Example of Proper Mounting for A and Detectors with Sloped Ceilings.

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**FIGURE A.29.8.3.4(4)(b) Example of Smoke Alarm or Smoke Detector Placement Between 10 ft (3.0 m) and 20 ft (6.1 m) Away in Hallway from Center of Stationary or Fixed Cooking Appliance.**

8. An approved carbon monoxide alarm shall be installed and maintained\* outside of **each** separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms\*\* if home has:
  - a. Fuel fired appliances are installed.
  - b. Attached garages (3 sides enclosed).
  - c. Fireplaces.
  - d. Combination smoke/carbon monoxide alarms are permissible.

\* Carbon monoxide alarms expire based on the manufacture's guidelines.  
\*\*Bedrooms with fuel fired appliances or fireplaces shall also have carbon monoxide alarms.
9. All heating devices shall be installed per manufacturer's guidelines.
  - a. Unvented gas heaters shall have an operating oxygen depletion device that shuts off at 18% oxygen (picture below), an operating safety shutoff device, and shall be located or guarded to prevent burn injuries.



- b. Portable, unvented heaters are not permitted; e.g. Kerosene heaters.
      - c. Fireplaces shall be equipped with fire screens, partitions, or other means to protect clients from burns.
      - d. Listed space heaters shall have a tip over switch, have a three foot clearance on all sides and be directly plugged into an outlet.

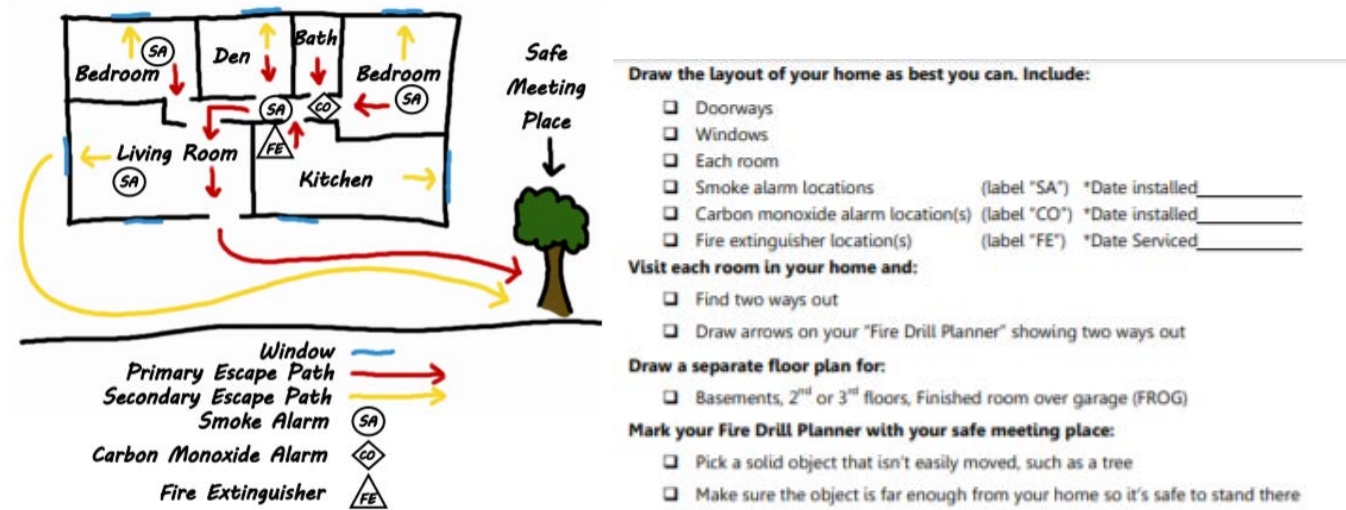
10. The dwelling shall be free of dangers that constitute an obvious fire hazard such as the following:

- a. Hoarding conditions (contact supervisor).
- b. Electrical Hazards, including using extension cords as permanent wiring.
- c. Improperly installed/maintained dryer vent.
- d. Storage of flammable liquids or gases.
- e. Items considered a fire hazard by the Deputy’s judgement (contact supervisor)

11. A fire escape plan describing what actions are to be taken by the family in the event of a fire must be developed and posted in one location.

- a. Recommended example found on our website, not required:

[Foster Home Fire Drill Planner](#)



b. A fire escape drill shall be conducted every three (3) months and records of the drills shall be maintained on the premises for three (3) years.

- i. The records shall give the date, time, and weather conditions during the drill, number evacuated, description, and evaluation of the fire drill. Fire drills shall include complete evacuation of all persons from the building.
- ii. A fire escape drill shall be conducted within twenty-four (24) hours of the arrival of each new foster child.

**B. Health Safety – All Initial Inspections**

1. Requesting caseworker email required for all inspections.
2. Year home is built prior to 1978? Children less than 6 years of age?
  - a. Limited Lead Risk Assessment Required SC Code of Laws §44-53-1310
3. Vinyl blinds – Positive for Lead?
4. Health Hazards? These are not citable by current regulations and are safety recommendations to foster parents. Click yes and describe the hazard(s) in the general comments section.
  - a. Water temperature between 110-120 degrees Fahrenheit
  - b. Improper storage of chemicals and weapons
  - c. Excessive garbage and uncleanliness. (contact supervisor)
  - d. Insect Infestations.
  - e. Items considered a health or life safety hazard by the Deputy's judgement, such as a violation of International Property Maintenance Code (contact supervisor)
5. Public Water/Waste or Well Water Sample SCCR.61-71 (OSFM not citing pending tests).
  - a. Shall be negative for Coliform and E.coli.
  - b. Positive samples will be handled by the Senior Deputy.
6. Septic hazards? SCCR.61-56.
7. Pet Inoculations annual per SC Code of Laws §47-5-60.
  - a. Cats
  - b. Dogs
  - c. Ferrets

**III. Interpretation Contact**

- A. Senior Deputy State Fire Marshal
- B. Chief Deputy State Fire Marshal
- C. Assistant State Fire Marshal
- D. State Fire Marshal