

Smoke alarms

Smoke alarms are required by the Building Regulations in all dwellings.

Summarised below are the requirements which pertain to domestic kitchens:

If a dwelling does **NOT** have an automatic fire detection and alarm system, then a suitable number of smoke alarms must be provided. They must be *mains operated* and may have a secondary battery operated power supply.

There must be at least one *smoke alarm* on each floor. They should be *linked* so that the alarm signal operates in all locations.

They should be sited so that there is a smoke alarm in the circulation space within 7.5 m of every habitable room.

Where a *kitchen area* is **NOT** separated from a stairway or circulation space by a door, there should be a compatible inter-linked *heat detector* in the kitchen, in addition to whatever smoke alarms are needed in the circulation spaces.

Smoke alarms should be *ceiling mounted* and at least 300 mm from walls and light fittings.

They may also be *wall mounted* provided they are above the level of any doorways opening into the space.

Smoke alarms must be easily *accessible* for maintenance, testing and cleaning.

Smoke alarms should **NOT** be fixed in *cooking areas* where steam, condensation or fumes could give false alarms.

Source: Building Regulations – Approved Document B

6

Services

Water supply

All water fittings and their installation should conform to WRAS (*Water Regulation Advisory Scheme*).

This is an organisation which provides guidance to the *Water Supply (water fittings) Regulations 1999*.

These regulations have superseded the former *Water Byelaws* issued by individual water companies.

Installation of water fittings should be undertaken by members of a recognised trade association, such as the Institute of Plumbing.

Pipework must be readily accessible, not chased into plaster or in floor ducts under cabinets. Make sure that stop cocks which should be provided under sinks, before dishwashers and any other appliances with water supplies, are reasonably accessible.

Where a sink waste discharges over a gully outside, this is a good place to incorporate a branch for a hose union tap, set about 600 mm high for garden use. The tap must be fitted with double check valves and be isolated by an inside stop cock to prevent freezing in winter.

Sinks are best fitted with 75 mm deep seal *bottle traps* which are easy to undo should anything unintended fall down the waste.

Hot water for sinks can either be supplied by a central storage cylinder or, where pipe runs are long, by a separate under-counter 'point-of-use' electric water heater. However, where dishwashers and washing machines are plumbed-in nearby, it is