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## Landlords urged to fit smoke alarms ahead of new regulations

Landlords are being urged to have smoke alarms fitted inside their properties or risk a fine of up to £5,000 under new regulations being introduced next month.

The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 come into force on October 1 and requires landlords to have smoke alarms installed on every storey of a property where a room is being used wholly or partly to live in. This includes bathrooms and toilets.

A carbon monoxide alarm must also be fitted in any room with a solid fuel burning fire, such as coal or wood, and landlords will be responsible for checking all alarms are working before tenants move in.

Some properties are exempt from the new law including social housing properties, licenced Houses in Multiple Occupation, properties with live-in landlords, long leases, student halls of residence, hostels and refuges, care homes and certain NHS buildings.

The law has been introduced as statistics show almost 40 per cent of fire related deaths occur in properties without a working smoke alarm. Just 83 per cent of private rented properties have the devices and the rate at which they are being installed has slowed, rising by just five per cent in the last decade. It is estimated these new regulations could help to prevent 26 deaths and 670 injuries a year.

Under the new rules Wychavon will be able to serve a notice on private landlords to fit or repair smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. If they do not comply they could face a fine, to be set by the council, of up to £5,000. Wychavon will also be required to have alarms installed or repaired and then re-charge the landlord for the work.

**Cllr Richard Morris, portfolio holder for economy and housing on Wychavon District Council, said:** "We are working with landlords and tenants to prepare them for the changes as part of our overall efforts to improve property standards across the district.

"Our advice to any landlord who has properties which do not already have smoke alarms installed is to get them fitted as soon as possible as there is no grace period and the new regulations will apply from October 1."

Tenants are being urged to inform their landlord if their property does not have working smoke alarms fitted and to tell them they must be installed. If the landlord refuses they should contact Wychavon's housing team by emailing [privatesectorhousing@wychavon.gov.uk](mailto:privatesectorhousing@wychavon.gov.uk)

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### Wychavon Communications

**Ian Dipple**

01386 565102

[ian.dipple@wychavon.gov.uk](mailto:ian.dipple@wychavon.gov.uk)

**Spencer Winnett**

01386 565585

[spencer.winnett@wychavon.gov.uk](mailto:spencer.winnett@wychavon.gov.uk)

- [www.wychavon.gov.uk](http://www.wychavon.gov.uk)
-  [facebook.com/wychavon](https://www.facebook.com/wychavon)
-  [twitter.com/wychavon](https://twitter.com/wychavon)
- Wychavon District Council, Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Pershore, Worcs. WR10 1PT