Smoke & CO Alarms

As of **1st October 2015** a regulation is in force relating to both smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in rental properties. These regulations are a result of a public discussion paper entitled 'Property Conditions in the Private Rental Sector' and will help to prevent up to 26 deaths and 670 injuries a year. Statistically people are at least 4 times more likely to die in a fire in the home if there's no working smoke alarm fitted.

Our understanding of the regulations is as follows:

Smoke Alarms

These must be installed <u>on every storey</u> of a rental property and positioned so that there is one within 7.5M of every habitable room door (bathrooms, WCs, etc. <u>are</u> classed as habitable rooms as well as bedrooms and living rooms). In many cases a smoke alarm in the ground floor hallway and on the first floor landing of a property will be sufficient (and subsequent landings if the property has more than 2 storeys). The Smoke Alarms must be installed as per the manufacturer's instructions; i.e. securely fixed to a ceiling (or wall mounted at a suitable height) and usually not within 30cm of a ceiling/wall join, a light fitting, or another ceiling mounted object.

The alarms must be tested regularly, **and always at the start of a new tenancy. This means that they must be tested on the <u>day of tenancy commencement</u>, with the Tenant(s) signing a document to acknowledge the date/time they have been tested, where they are installed within the property, and that they are working with the 'test button'.** *They should* also *be instructed to test (and clean) them as per the manufacturer's guidelines with replacement of batteries and/or prompt reporting of faults (which should be rectified at the earliest opportunity by the Landlord or Agent, and always within 28 days).*

Please note where Smoke Alarms are in areas which are difficult to reach (such as mounted to high ceilings) it may be necessary for safety reasons for the Landlord to organise checking of these as opposed to the onus being on the Tenant(s) for testing. Alarms should also be replaced in line with the manufacturer's guidelines (usually every 5 or 10 years).

Carbon Monoxide (CO) Alarms

These must be installed in all rooms in a rental property that contain a 'solid fuel' burning appliance (e.g. wood burning stove, open coal/wood fire, solid fuel Aga, etc.). We would also *recommend* installing these alarms in rooms containing other fuel burning appliances (i.e. gas, oil or LPG). These alarms should be installed as per the manufacturer's guidelines and should be tested and maintained as is detailed above, *to include testing on the day of tenancy commencement with sign off by the Tenant.*

Information above taken from various sources including the AIIC and the UK government website.