

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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(Governor's Bill)  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

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ONE HUNDRED AND TENTH LEGISLATURE

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**Legislative Document**

**No. 1573**

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H. P. 1409 House of Representatives, April 30, 1981  
Referred to the Committee on Legal Affairs. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Representative Beaulieu of Portland.

Cosponsors: Representative Tuttle of Sanford, Representative Soulas of Bangor and Senator Charette of Androscoggin.

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STATE OF MAINE

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IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-ONE

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**AN ACT to Require Fire Detectors in All Multiapartment Dwellings and New Single-family Residences.**

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Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine, as follows:

Sec. 1. 25 MRSA § 2464 is enacted to read:

§ 2464. Fire detectors

1. **Definition.** "Fire detector" means any device which, when activated by the presence of smoke, provides an audible alarm suitable to warn the occupants within the individual dwelling unit in which it is attached, which has been approved for use in this State by the State Fire Marshal.

2. **Fire detectors required.** The owner of record shall install, or cause to be installed, not less than one approved fire detector upon or near the ceiling in areas within, or giving access to, bedrooms in:

A. Any single-family dwelling, the construction of which is completed after the effective date of this section;

**B. Any single-family dwelling which undergoes additions or improvements costing more than \$3,000 after the effective date of this section; and**

**C. Each apartment in any building of multifamily occupancy, other than any occupied by the owner of the building.**

**3. Multiapartment buildings. In multiapartment buildings more than 3 stories in height, approved fire detectors shall also be installed in each corridor and hallway on each floor.**

**4. Regulations. The State Fire Marshal is authorized and directed to promulgate by regulation criteria for approval and a list of approved fire detectors.**

**5. Penalties. Whoever violates this section is guilty of a civil infraction and shall be subject to a forfeiture of not more than \$500 for each violation. The court may waive any penalty or cost against any violator upon satisfactory proof that the violation was corrected within 10 days of the issuance of a complaint.**

**Sec. 2. Effective date.** The Revised Statutes, Title 25, section 2464, subsections 2, 3 and 5, as enacted by section 1 of this Act, shall become effective on January 1, 1982.

**Sec. 3. Transition.** The State Fire Marshal shall promulgate an initial set of regulations as required by the Revised Statutes, Title 25, section 2464, subsection 4, no later than October 31, 1981.

#### STATEMENT OF FACT

This bill requires fire detection equipment in each living unit of all new and substantially reconstructed single-family dwellings and all apartment houses. Maine has one of the highest fire death rates in the nation and, according to statistics from the National Fire Data Center of the United States Fire Administration, the presence of smoke detectors reduces by 1/2 the chance of death in a residential fire, yet such devices retail for as little as \$10.

The bill requires the State Fire Marshal to identify approved fire detectors. It also allows courts to waive penalties for violators upon installation. Most provisions of the bill become effective on January 1, 1982, to enable a reasonable time to install all the necessary equipment.