

AN ACT

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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District of
Columbia
Official Code*

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To amend, on an emergency basis, the Smoke Detector Act of 1978 to require apartment building owners to post notice in conspicuous places in common areas in a building instructing tenants on the operation of a building fire alarm; to notify tenants whether the building fire alarm is connected to smoke alarms in individual apartments, or to fire department and emergency medical services; to maintain a fire safety plan and conduct periodic fire drills; and to instruct tenants to immediately call 911 in the event of a fire.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Fire Alarm Notice and Tenant Fire Safety Emergency Amendment Act of 2009”.

Sec. 2. Section 6 of the Smoke Detector Act of 1978, effective June 20, 1978 (D.C. Law 2-81; D.C. Official Code § 6-751.05), is amended by adding a new subsection (d) to read as follows:

Note,
§ 6-751.05

“(d)(1) Within 30 days of the effective date of the Fire Alarm Notice and Tenant Fire Safety Emergency Amendment Act of 2009, passed on emergency basis on March 3, 2009 (Enrolled version of Bill 18-168), and in addition to any existing requirements in law or regulation, an owner of a building containing 2 or more dwelling or rooming units shall provide written notice, in a language delineated by the Language Access Act of 2004, effective June 19, 2004 (D.C. Law 15-167; D.C. Official Code § 2-1931 *et seq.*), as necessary, to each tenant by first class mail, and post notice in conspicuous places in common areas of the building, as required in this subsection. Written notice shall also be provided to each new tenant, as required in this subsection. The Mayor shall provide a sample form of the notice required by this subsection.

“(2) The written notice shall include, at a minimum, instructions on the operation of a building fire alarm, whether this alarm is separate from the smoke alarms in individual apartments, and a statement that the building alarm is not necessarily connected to the fire department or emergency rescue, and that, in the event of a fire, they must be contacted immediately by calling 911.

“(3) Failure to post notice as required by this subsection shall be a violation of

this act, and subject to penalties as provided in this act.

“(4) In addition to the notice required by this subsection, the owner, or the owner’s agent, shall maintain a fire safety plan and conduct fire drills in each building that is subject to the provisions of this subsection, and contains 5 or more units, at least once every 12 months.”.

Sec. 3. Fiscal impact statement.

The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement of the Budget Director as the fiscal impact statement required by section 602(c)(3) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1206.02(c)(3)).

Sec. 4. Effective date.

This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), and shall remain in effect for no longer than 90 days, as provided for emergency acts of the Council of the District of Columbia in section 412(a) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 788; D.C. Official Code § 1-204.12(a)).

Chairman
Council of the District of Columbia

Mayor
District of Columbia