



3901 Liberty Street Road • Aurora, Illinois 60504-8122
Telephone: 630.851.7330 • Fax: 630.851.9309

To: Local Fire Service Administration

From: First Alert

Date: July 17, 2008

Re: Photoelectric-Specific Legislation

The Vermont State Legislature recently approved Senate Bill 226 requiring photoelectric-type smoke alarms to be installed in new and existing single-family homes. This bill was signed by Governor Jim Douglas on Thursday May 29, 2008 for passage into law. Massachusetts already abides by a state law that mandates the usage of photoelectric smoke alarms near specified rooms. Similar legislation is pending in Tennessee House Bill 2528 and Senate Bill 2600. Smoke sensing technology type policy discussions are also being discussed in Indiana, Iowa, Ohio, Utah, and California.

Clearly there is a growing consensus within state legislatures as well as the fire service community that favors photoelectric technology. First Alert has played a crucial role in a tremendous industry effort to inform consumers on the importance of the home safety technologies; and more specifically the differences between smoke sensing technologies. In light of recent studies and ongoing industry-performed field research regarding the comparison of photoelectric and ionization smoke alarms, First Alert is offering the following two scientifically substantiated determinations:

1. Field research indicates photoelectric smoke alarms exhibit significantly fewer nuisance alarms than ionization smoke alarms.^{1 2}
2. To silence a triggered smoke alarm, about 22% of consumers will remove the battery, leaving the alarm inoperable and potentially putting the residence and its occupants at risk should a true fire occur.³

Considering photoelectric smoke alarms are determined by industry experts to be significantly less prone to nuisance alarm and potential disabling of the batteries by consumers, we support and encourage fire service administration and lawmakers that are moving toward the use of photoelectric smoke sensing technology. In addition, First Alert aims to reassure all public safety advocates that ours is an organization that actively supports our consumers amidst this safety-related legislation through our comprehensive

¹ [Cleary, Thomas. Residential Smoke Alarm Performance. Building and Fire Research Laboratory, National Institute of Standards and Technology. UL Smoke and Fire Dynamics Seminar. November, 2007.](#)

² [Mueller, B.A. Randomized controlled trial of ionization and photoelectric smoke alarm functionality. Injury Prevention BMJ, 2008; 14:80-86.](#)

³ 1997 Fire Awareness/Escape Planning Study for National Fire Protection Association, Quincy, MA, August 1997, Tables 3 & 4.



3901 Liberty Street Road • Aurora, Illinois 60504-8122
Telephone: 630.851.7330 • Fax: 630.851.9309

photoelectric product line. For your reference, our Battery Operated Photoelectric Products include:

- **Photoelectric Smoke Alarms**
- **Photoelectric Smoke Alarms with Escape Light**
- **Photoelectric Smoke Alarms with Long Life Lithium Battery**
- **Combination Photoelectric Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm**
- **Combination Photoelectric Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm with Voice Output Including Hazard Location**
- **ONELINK® Photoelectric Wireless Interconnected with Voice Output Smoke Alarms**
- **ONELINK® Photoelectric Wireless Interconnected Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms with Voice Output Including Hazard Location**

In addition, our Hardwired Photoelectric Product Line will support all new construction and replacement needs:

- **Photoelectric Smoke Alarms with Interconnect Capability**
- **Photoelectric Smoke Alarms with Battery Backup with Interconnect Capability**
- **Photoelectric Smoke Alarms with Escape Light and Battery Backup with Interconnect Capability**
- **Photoelectric Smoke Alarms with Voice Output Including Hazard Location and Interconnect Capability**

Few entities exist that dedicate more time and resources towards safety-related public policy and education as effectively as the fire service. Please use this information in your safety education efforts. You are encouraged to contact our External Communications department with any questions or concerns. Let us be a resource for your efforts in public safety education. For more information please contact Tom Russo of Public Relations at (630) 499-3214.