



SMOKE ALARM TYPES

Photoelectric Smoke Alarms

This type, also known as optical or photo-optical, detects visible particles of combustion e.g. smouldering cigarette smoke. They respond to a wide range of fires, but they are particularly responsive to smouldering fires and the dense smoke given off by foam filled furnishings or overheated PVC wiring.

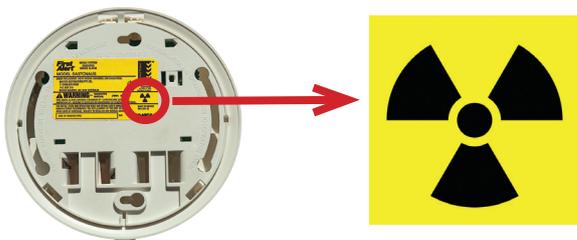
Advantages

- Good for smouldering fire and dense smoke
- Not as prone to cooking nuisance alarms
- Contain no radioactive material
- Suitable for general use

Your protection against fire increases with the quality and type of smoke alarm that is installed. Research indicates that photoelectric smoke alarms are generally more effective than ionisation types across a wider range of fires experienced in homes. For this reason, QFRS recommends that photoelectric smoke alarms be installed, especially if you are installing only one alarm. If you already have smoke alarms installed, QFRS recommends that you supplement the existing alarms with photoelectric types, especially between sleeping areas and exits from your home (e.g. hallways); and at the end of the service life of existing smoke alarms, replace them with photoelectric types. It is expected that stocks of photoelectric alarms will become more readily available at retailers as demand increases.

Ionisation Alarms

This type detects invisible particles of combustion e.g. from cooking toast. They activate quickly for fast, flaming fires with little visible smoke.



Ionisation smoke alarms contain a very small amount of radioactive material and are completely safe under all normal conditions they may encounter, including a fire, and pose no threat to people or the environment.

Other Smoke Alarm Options

These include:

- Alarms for deaf and hearing-impaired people
- Alarms with emergency lights
- Special models for kitchens and caravans
- Inter-connectable models that sound alarms in all connected units

What to look for?

Queensland Fire and Rescue Service strongly recommends, when purchasing smoke alarms, you check that it complies with the Standard AS 3786-1993. The following labels will appear when smoke alarms comply with this Standard.



For further information go to CSIRO's Activfire website (www.activfire.gov.au/smokeAlarms.asp) which provides consumers and fire safety advisers with details of smoke alarms that have been verified as conforming with requirements of Australian Standard AS 3786-1993.