

# SMOKE ALARMS FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING



*Artwork by L. S. Pierce*



Center for High-Risk Outreach  
One Batterymarch Park  
Quincy, MA 02169

## Smoke Alarms Save Lives

Although working smoke alarms are essential for every home, not every resident has the same needs. The impact of smoke alarms can't be overstated since the early warning signal they provide is the first line of defense most people have against a fire. Since the commonly used single-station smoke alarm became available to consumers in the 1970s, the U.S. home fire death rate has been reduced by half.

Conventional smoke alarms, however, can't fully address the needs of people who are deaf or hard of hearing and who can't rely on the sound of a conventional alarm to alert them to smoke or fire. Today, safety device manufacturers offer smoke alarms that use sound and strobe lights to alert people to fires in the home.

Fire alarm codes require the installation of interconnected, multiple-station smoke alarms throughout new residential construction, including outside each sleeping area, inside of each sleeping room, and on every level. These requirements offer an advantage over the use of single-station smoke alarms in existing construction because when one interconnected

alarm activates, all the interconnected alarms sound. A basement-level alarm, for example, may not be loud enough to wake someone, particularly someone who is hard of hearing, in an upstairs bedroom.

Other smoke alarm features designed to benefit people who are deaf or hard of hearing include alarms equipped with strobe lights. It should be noted, however, that integral or separate strobe lights operate in the AC power mode and not in the backup battery mode. Battery backup does support the remaining smoke alarm functions and is generally required for new construction.

### **NFPA Center for High-Risk Outreach**



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## **Manufacturers of Smoke Alarms Meeting UL Standard 1971 for People Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing**

### **Gentex Corporation**

Corporate Headquarters  
600 North Centennial St.  
Zeeland, MI 49464  
(616) 772-1800  
(616) 772-7348 – fax

The 713CS (AC only) and 7139CS (AC with battery backup) photoelectric-type single/multiple-station interconnectable smoke alarms feature a 90dB piezoelectric alarm horn and a 177 candela strobe. Models 713LS and 7139LS are similar but are single-station units that are not interconnectable and are supplied by cord and plug.

### **BRK Brands**

3901 Liberty Street Rd.  
Aurora, IL 60504-8122  
Attention: BRK Electronics  
(800) 323-9005  
www.brkelectronics.com

The 100S (AC only) ionization-type single/multiple-station interconnectable smoke alarms feature an 85dB piezoelectric alarm horn and a 177 candela strobe.

### **First Alert**

3901 Liberty Street Rd.  
Aurora, IL 60504-8122  
(800) 323-9005  
www.firstalert.com

The SA100B (AC only) ionization-type single/multiple-station interconnectable smoke alarms feature an 85dB piezoelectric alarm horn and a 177 candela strobe.

### **Kidde**

1394 South 3rd St.  
Mebane, NC 27302  
(800) 880-6788  
www.kiddeus.com

The SL177i strobe light is an AC powered 177 candela strobe that must be interconnected with a Kidde AC powered multiple-station smoke alarm. The SL177 is similar but can be connected to any smoke alarm that includes a suitable relay output.

\*Fire departments installing smoke alarms at no charge in their communities should contact individual smoke alarm manufacturers for discount prices.

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## **NFPA Web sites**

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[www.firepreventionweek.org](http://www.firepreventionweek.org)  
[www.losbuenosrecuerdos.org](http://www.losbuenosrecuerdos.org)  
[www.riskwatch.org](http://www.riskwatch.org)  
[www.sparky.org](http://www.sparky.org)