

Building Code Classification of Bed-And-Breakfast Inns

Residential occupancies containing sleeping units where the occupants are primarily transient in nature are classified as hotels/motels (Group R-1) by the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code.

Except:

Nonproprietor occupied bed-and-breakfast and other transient boarding facilities, not more than three stories tall, with a maximum of ten occupants, may be classified similarly to single-family dwellings (Group R-5) if smoke detectors are installed in accordance with the current code.

Proprietor occupied bed-and-breakfast and other transient boarding facilities, not more than three stories tall, with a maximum of five guest rooms, may be classified similarly to single-family dwellings (Group R-5) if smoke detectors are installed in accordance with the current code.

To qualify for either of the exceptions stated above, smoke detectors shall comply with all of the following:

- Listed in accordance with UL 217
- Installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- Hard-wired to the building's electrical system, with battery back-up
- Installed in each sleeping room
- Installed outside actual sleeping areas, but in the vicinity of the bedrooms (i.e. an upstairs hallway)
- Installed on each additional story of the building, including basements (not crawl spaces) and habitable attics. (To be considered "habitable", an attic must have a floor area of at least 70 sq. ft., not counting the floor area under any sloping roof less than 5' tall, or the floor area under any flat ceiling less than 7' tall.)
- All smoke detectors must be interconnected so that if smoke is detected at one device all of them will sound an alarm

An electrical permit is required to install smoke detectors.