



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

Department of Administration
DIVISION OF CAPITAL PROJECTS AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
BUILDING CODE STANDARDS COMMITTEE
One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908-5859
(401)-222-1129 FAX 222-2599

BLANKET VARIANCE 23 (BV-23)

Effective: May 14, 2009

Purpose: Rhode Island General Law section 23-28.1-2(b)(2)(i) has been adopted by the General Assembly. This statute directed the State Fire Board to provide reasonable standards for the installation of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in all existing three (3) family dwellings. The deadline for such installation was set to be on or before July 1, 2008. The State Fire Board then developed and implemented the above-referenced standards as Section 8, Chapter 25 of the Rhode Island Life Safety Code. These further regulations directed compliance with the State Building Code and both NFPA 72 and 720.

Serious questions arose as to installation methods. It was determined that SBC-5 NEC 2008 Article 210.25 required that these devices, located in the common areas of the three (3) family building, would not be allowed to draw power from a dwelling unit. This led to the initial unanticipated expense of installing a separate electrical meter in the building. A second unanticipated expense resulted from compliance with the electrical service provider's standing policy that new meters could only be installed on the exterior of the building. Accordingly, the owner of an existing three (3) family house could now incur thousands of dollars in unanticipated additional expenses for the installation of Smoke and CO detectors that were originally anticipated to cost far less.

This exception is limited to those owners of three (3) family dwellings who are simply complying with the provisions of RIGL 23-28.1-2(b)(2)(i) and Section 8, Chapter 25 of the Rhode Island Life Safety Code. Any such owner who utilizes this exception is advised that his or her failure to maintain the electrical power to the Smoke and CO detectors located in his or her three (3) family dwelling will result in a violation of the State Fire Code and subject the above owner to fines of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) a day under the provisions of RIGL 23-28.3-9.

Amend: For the purpose of RIGL 23-28.1-2(b)(2)(i) and Section 8, Chapter 25 of the Rhode Island Life Safety Code. of the Rhode Island State Fire Code the requirement of SBC-5 NEC 2008 article 210.25 shall be amended as follows;

(C) Power for the associated smoke and carbon monoxide detectors required for three (3) family dwellings, pursuant to RIGL 23-28.1-2(b)(2)(i) and the regulations adopted there under, located in the common areas of a three (3) family dwelling shall be permitted to be supplied from

equipment that supplies an individual dwelling unit, provided arrangements have been made that there will be no interruption in power to said common area smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

(D) If electric service to any such three family dwelling is upgraded or an electric meter is added for any other purpose, said property shall comply with article 210.25 (A) and (B).

This Blanket Variance expires upon the effective date of the next edition of this code.
Contact the Office of the State Building Code Commission for further details.

For the Board:

John P. Leyden, Executive Secretary