

## Information Bulletin

---

# Clarification for the Installation of Fire Alarm Visible Signal Devices

The Manitoba Building Code (MBC) amendment to National Building Code Sentence 3.2.4.19.(1) requires that visible fire alarm signal devices be installed in all buildings.

### 3.2.4.19. Visible Signals

- 1) Visible signal devices shall be installed in addition to *alarm signals* in all *buildings*.
- 2) Visible signal devices are permitted to be installed in lieu of audible signal devices in the compartments referred to in Article 3.3.3.6.
- 3) Visible signal devices required by Sentence (1) shall be installed so that the signal from at least one device is visible throughout the *floor area* or portion thereof in which they are installed. (See Note A-3.2.4.19.(3).)

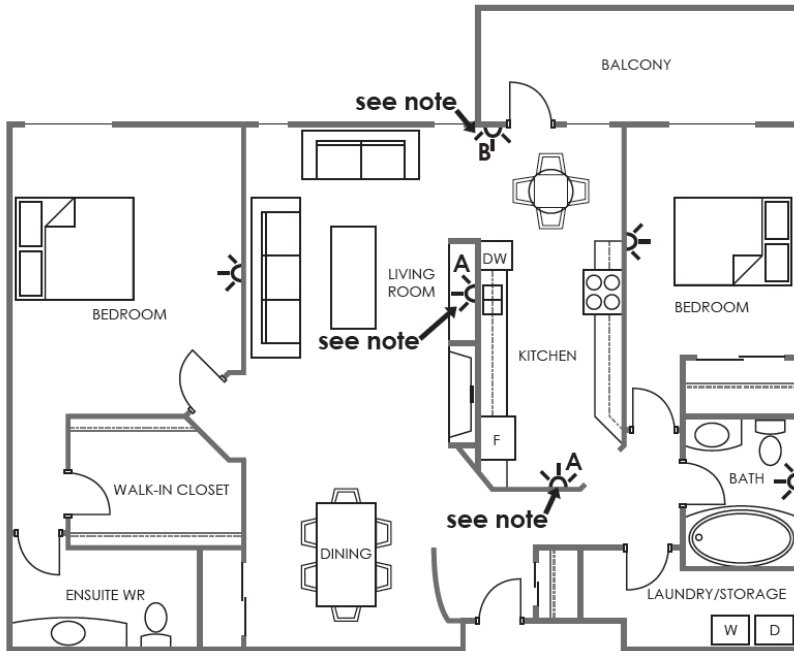
The City of Winnipeg interpretation of this requirement is that the signals must be visible throughout the floor area, similar to the requirement that fire alarm system audibility is required throughout the floor area. It is reasonable then, that the signals should be visible from every location where people are likely to spend any length of time.

It should not be assumed that this requirement is met by simply locating visible signal devices in egress routes. In most cases, there will need to be additional visible signal devices provided than what is typically provided for audible devices. Refer to CAN/ULC-S524, *Standard for installation of fire alarm systems*, for installation requirements and guidelines for visibility of signals.

By nature of their usage, every bathroom and every sleeping room in suites of residential occupancy shall have visible signals installed. These signals would be in addition to those required in the remainder of the dwelling unit to meet the above noted requirement that the signals be visible throughout the floor area. Refer to the dwelling unit plan below for a typical visible signal layout.

Visible signal devices are required:

- For new fire alarm system installations, and
- In existing buildings where the fire alarm system installation was subject to the January 1, 2012 MBC amendments, and later MBC editions.



note:  
The two devices shown at the locations marked “A” may be substituted by the single device shown at location “B” if it is deemed that adequate visibility is provided by the single device.

**DWELLING UNIT PLAN - TYPICAL VISIBLE SIGNAL LAYOUT  
NTS**