

# British Columbia Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Alarms Collection Site Guidelines

October 2021



## **DISCLAIMER**

The Collection Site Guidelines (“Guidelines”) are intended to provide guidance to collection site operators participating as a collection site in the British Columbia Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms Collection Program (“alarms recycling program”).

The practices described in these Guidelines are not intended to replace any standards, acts or regulations required under Local, Provincial or Federal law; nor are the guidelines intended to relieve the collection site operator or staff of requirements under the law.

Product Care Recycling accepts no responsibility and assumes no liability resulting from the incorrect use of information contained in the Guidelines or from the use of this information in any circumstances other than those described.

Forms provided in the Guidelines may not be current due to changes in processes, regulations and procedures. Updates will be provided to your site as required. Please ensure you are using the most updated version.

The collection site is a place of work regulated by the WorkSafeBC. In addition to the Guidelines, you must comply with all environmental, health and safety regulations to ensure workers are properly equipped for their work and they understand:

- Hazards they may encounter in their work;
- Safety practices needed to protect themselves from harm; and
- Actions they may need to take in an emergency, such as a spill or fire.

Further information about workplace safety can be obtained from your local WorkSafeBC office.

## QUICK REFERENCE SHEET

### CONTACT INFORMATION

<b>Product Care Recycling</b>	Toll Free in BC: 1.877.592.2972 Lower Mainland: 604.592.2972 Fax: 604.592.2982 Email: <a href="mailto:bcalarmrecycle@productcare.org">bcalarmrecycle@productcare.org</a> Website: <a href="http://www.productcare.org">www.productcare.org</a>
<b>Dispatch Requests</b>	Toll-free in BC: 1.877.592.2972 Lower Mainland: 604.592.2972 x227 Fax: 604.592.2982 Email: <a href="mailto:alarmpickup@productcare.org">alarmpickup@productcare.org</a>
<b>Ordering Communication Materials</b>	<a href="https://www.productcare.org/service-partners/promotion-and-education/">https://www.productcare.org/service-partners/promotion-and-education/</a>
<b>Product Care website for collection sites and other service partners</b>	<a href="https://www.productcare.org/service-partners/resources/">https://www.productcare.org/service-partners/resources/</a>
<b>Recycling Council of BC Hotline</b>	Toll Free in BC: 1.800.667.4321 Lower Mainland: 604.732.9253 Website: <a href="https://www.rcbc.ca">https://www.rcbc.ca</a>

#### Important Forms

These Guidelines include the container request form and incident report form to use and photocopy as needed (see [Appendix 2](#), [Appendix 3](#)).

#### Keep Important Records On Hand

The following records must be kept in a secure location so they can be produced when requested by a Product Care representative or a government compliance officer:

- Bills of Lading (shipping documents) for products collected from the collection site
- Incident reports

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## 1 PRODUCT CARE RECYCLING

Product Care Recycling (“Product Care”) is a federally incorporated, not-for-profit product stewardship association formed in response to stewardship regulations and is governed by a multi-sector industry board of directors.

Product Care manages the BC Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms Stewardship Program (“alarms recycling program”) on behalf of its industry members, and provides a network of collection sites where consumers can return and recycle used smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms. This is **NOT** a government-run program.

### **Additional Information Contact**

For more information regarding the alarms recycling program, or if you have any questions after reading the Guidelines, please contact Product Care. See contact information on page 3.

## 2 COLLECTION SITE RESPONSIBILITIES

### 2.1 SITE OPERATOR

As the operator of a collection site, you are responsible for ensuring that:

- The requirements set out in the Guidelines are applied correctly at your collection site.
- Employees have read the Guidelines.

#### **Change of Collection Site Information**

Collection sites must provide Product Care written notification **in advance** of any changes to operating hours, location, ownership, etc. by emailing [bcalarmrecycle@productcare.org](mailto:bcalarmrecycle@productcare.org).

### 2.2 SITE EMPLOYEES

All collection site employees are responsible for ensuring their work is performed correctly and safely. Employees must:

- Read the Guidelines.
- Be aware of and apply the work practices and requirements described in the Guidelines correctly.
- Take part in any instruction or training offered by Product Care.
- Be aware and comply with WorkSafeBC general safety requirements

### 2.3 TRAINING RECORDS

Collection site operators must have new staff review these Guidelines and sign and date the review form (see [Appendix 1](#)). Keep staff training records for three (3) years.

### 2.4 REPORTING INCIDENTS OR FINES

The collection site must provide notice of the following to Product Care via fax (604-592-2982) or email ([bcalarmrecycle@productcare.org](mailto:bcalarmrecycle@productcare.org)):

- Any incidents that required the assistance of first responders within 24 hours of the occurrence.
- Any regulatory orders or fines within 48 hours of receiving such orders or fines.

### 3 ACCEPTED AND NOT ACCEPTED PRODUCTS

#### 3.1 ACCEPTED PRODUCTS

The alarms recycling program accepts residential-use “stand alone” smoke alarms, as defined by the CAN/ULC-S531 standard, and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms, as defined by the CAN/CSA 6.19 standard. Included alarms perform both a smoke and/or CO detection and alarm sounding function. These products are typically disc, square or rectangular shaped and made of plastic that are purchased at retail and installed by consumers. They can be powered by a battery, plugged in or hard-wired to a building’s electrical system. Batteries included in the alarm are also accepted by the program.

The four types of accepted products are:

- ✓ Smoke alarms (ionization and photoelectric types)
- ✓ CO alarms
- ✓ Combination smoke/CO alarms
- ✓ Combination smoke alarms/heat detectors

Common brands include Dicon, Kidde, Garrison, Fire-X, First Alert, American Sensor, and BRK.

Smoke alarms and CO alarms may be returned with or without the battery intact. Customers returning used smoke & CO alarms are NOT required to remove the battery.

**Examples:**



### 3.2 NOT ACCEPTED PRODUCTS

The alarms recycling program does not accept the items listed below. These items should NOT be placed in the program's collection containers.

Products that are not accepted by the program or are abandoned, or accidentally collected by your collection site should be managed separately from the program and not be sent to Product Care. Please refer the consumer to the Recycling Council of British Columbia (1-800-667-4321) to find a way to recycle those products.

Please be aware that Product Care may issue penalties or fees, or cancel the agreement with a collection site, if there is an ongoing issue of collection containers containing items that are not accepted by the program.

#### Not Accepted Products

Some devices look similar to smoke alarms that detect smoke but do not act as an alarm. These devices that perform only the detection function and not the alarm function, e.g. a smoke and/or CO detector unit connected to a building-wide monitoring or alarm system, are NOT accepted by the program. These types of units are typically installed in commercial buildings. These types of units are defined by the CAN/ULC-S529 standard. Common brands include Notifier, System Sensor, Honeywell, Mircom, Potter, and Edwards.



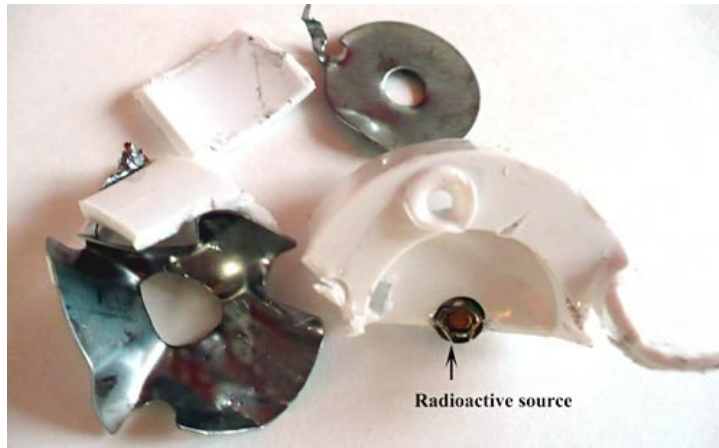


### Not Accepted Products

**Control boxes or fire bells** associated with alarms and detectors (natural gas alarms, propane detectors etc.).



**Smoke alarms that show signs of severe physical damage or tampering.** Please refer to the section 5.4 on “Other Hazards” for information on potential concerns.



### Not Accepted Products

#### Heat sensors/detectors or other detectors

Devices that perform some other detection function only. They may look like a smoke/CO alarm, but will usually display a mention, such as “Heat Detector – Not a life safety device” or “Flood Detector” or other indication that the product is not a smoke/CO alarm.



#### Thermostats, light switch, or timer



Individual batteries that are not included in a Smoke/CO alarm are not accepted by the program.

## 4 SUPPLIES

### 4.1 IMPORTANT FORMS

The Guidelines include several important forms to use and photocopy as needed:

- Container Request Form (see [Appendix 2](#))
- Incident report (see [Appendix 3](#))

### 4.2 COLLECTION MATERIALS

Collection sites must use collection containers provided by Product Care only. Product Care provides cardboard boxes free of charge (see [Appendix 4](#)) with the alarms recycling program identification on two sides and reference “UN2911” as required under federal law. Product Care also provides mega bags and large gaylord cardboard boxes free of charge (see [Appendix 4](#)).

Collection sites should use packing tape to seal full boxes.

Make sure to order any collection containers and tape that you need at the time you place your order for pickup. Ensure that you place an order for supplies before you run out as it could take several days from the time you place an order to when you receive the supplies.

**NOTE:** Boxes require assembly prior to use. See [Appendix 5](#) for box assembly instructions.

### 4.3 COMMUNICATION MATERIALS

The alarms recycling program provides the following materials to help communicate with your customers:

- Posters
- Outdoor signs
- Rack cards

#### **Posters**

Each collection site is provided with a 11”x17” poster to use as a sign. The poster must be installed in an area that is easily visible by the public (e.g., near the entrance of your site or above the collection area.) The poster will advise the public that the collection site is an authorized facility for alarm collections, as well as educate the consumer on accepted and non-accepted items.

#### **Outdoor signs**

Each collection site is provided with a 23”x30” outdoor sign. The sign must be installed in an area that is easily visible by the public (e.g., near the entrance of your site or above the collection area.) The sign will advise the public that the collection site is an authorized facility for alarm collections, as well as educate the consumer on accepted and non-accepted items.

## **Rack Cards**

The alarms recycling program supplies collection sites free of charge with 5"x8" rack cards containing important information about the program and the products that are accepted by the program.

## **Ordering Communication Materials**

To replenish your stock for free, call (1.877.592.2972 ext. 216) or order online through our website at <https://www.productcare.org/service-partners/promotion-and-education/>.

# **5 COLLECTION SITE SETUP**

## **5.1 ACCESS TO THE COLLECTION SITE**

A collection site must be open for the public to return smoke and CO alarms during regular business hours. Exceptions may apply, subject to approval by Product Care.

People or animals should not be able to access the collection site when it is closed to make sure that stored smoke and CO alarms are protected from improper handling, theft, or damage. Make sure that all materials are secured inside your facility and protected from weather at all times.

## **5.2 STORAGE OF FULL COLLECTION CONTAINERS**

Once a collection container is full, move it from the return collection station to a storage location to stage for shipping. The storage area for collected materials should be:

- Away from high-traffic areas
- Inaccessible to the public (i.e., staff access only)
- Monitored and safely maintained
- Protected from the weather and elements
- Secured during non-operating hours

More information on storing alarms can be found in section 6.3 below.

# **6 DEPOT OPERATIONS**

## **6.1 RECEIVING PRODUCTS FROM CONSUMERS**

### **Smoke and CO Alarm Return Limit**

Customers may return up to 40 smoke and CO alarms at one time. If they have more than this amount, please ask them to contact Product Care directly.

## Service Fees

No fees may be charged to customers for the dropping off of program products. Environmental handling fees (EHF) are charged at the point of purchase to fund the alarms recycling program. EHF rates vary according to the type of alarm and can be found on our website at [www.productcare.org](http://www.productcare.org).

If your facility provides collection services for other products that are not included in the alarms recycling program (i.e., products not accepted by the program) and you charge a fee for that service, you may continue to charge the fees for collection of those items, but not for the collection of products included in the alarms recycling program. Any products not accepted by the program must be managed separately from this program. More information on products not accepted can be found in section 3.2 above. Any fee charged by the collection site is not related to the alarms recycling program.

## 6.2 HANDLING PROGRAM PRODUCTS

Smoke and CO alarms dropped off at a collection site should be taken from the customer and placed in alarms collection containers carefully and not thrown. The alarms recycling program is a drop off program, not a self-serve one.

To ensure safe handling of alarms and to minimize risk, ensure that collection containers:

- Remain structurally sound and do not show evidence of damage.
- Are set up in a stable and secure location (i.e. they can't tip over easily)
- Are not left on counters or places that they could be knocked over or down easily. Damaged alarms may cause a risk of health hazard.
- Are sealed and taped when full.

## 6.3 STORING PROGRAM PRODUCTS

Fill collection containers correctly to protect against shifting and breakage during transport. Full smoke and CO alarms containers should be stored and packaged in a way that avoids breakage:

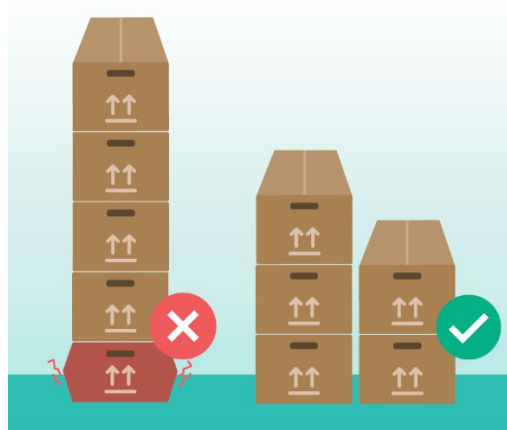
- Do not overfill collection boxes. Do not force smoke and CO alarms into collection boxes.



- Store collection boxes in such a way that they will not easily tip over or get damaged:



- Do not stack boxes of smoke and CO alarms more than four boxes high to avoid boxes from falling over.



## 6.4 PREPARING CONTAINERS FOR SHIPMENT

To prepare the collection containers for shipment:

- Check that the container is structurally sound and has no evidence of damage.
- Check that the container is not overfilled as described in section 6.3 above.
- Ensure there are no products in the container that are not accepted by the program.
- Close containers and securely seal with packing tape in preparation for pick up.

## 6.5 HEALTH AND SAFETY

**IMPORTANT:** The Health and Safety section of these Guidelines is a supplement to your facility's existing Occupational Health and Safety Manual. It is not intended to replace any applicable laws, regulations or standards. Nor are these Guidelines intended to relieve the collection site operator or employees of any obligations under other legislation.

This section only includes health and safety issues as they pertain to the alarms recycling program and NOT other services offered or activities conducted at your facility. For further information on general health and safety issues, including accident prevention and procedures, please consult your facility's Occupational Health and Safety Manual or WorkSafe BC.

### Lifting Hazards

Moving collection containers of smoke and CO alarms requires bending and lifting, which can cause injury if done incorrectly. Use the following simple precautions to reduce the risk of injury:



- When lifting, bring objects near to the body; do not try to lift at arm's length.
- Bend your knees and keep your back straight.
- Only lift what you can manage safely; ask for assistance if needed.
- Ensure that collection containers are not overfilled to avoid unsafe lifting.

### Other Hazards

Smoke and CO alarms are commonly used in households and are considered safe under normal conditions of use. Although some smoke alarms contain a very small amount of radioactive material, the level of radioactivity emitted by the unit in any state is well below existing background levels and is not considered a hazard. According to research compiled by the program, a worker could spend 24 hours a day for an entire year two meters away from more than 30,000 smoke alarms and still receive an exposure level less than half of the WorkSafeBC limit. There is no feasible scenario that would involve a collection site stockpiling the quantity of alarms required to reach even half of that limit.

A smoke alarm needs to be significantly damaged to potentially increase the hazard associated with the product. The robust nature of the casing of smoke alarms ensures that regular wear and tear from consumer use, collection site operation or transportation does not cause physical damage to the plastic casing of the smoke alarm. Even if the casing is slightly damaged, the radioactive material is contained in a sealed and extremely robust source within the alarm. Regardless of this low potential risk level, the program does not accept damaged smoke alarms. Depots should not accept smoke alarms that show signs of severe physical damage or tampering.

Depot staff should not attempt to disassemble the alarms at all nor remove the batteries from the alarm.

## 7 SHIPMENT AND TRANSPORT

### 7.1 SHIPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION

#### Requesting a Pick Up

You should order a pickup once one or more of your collection containers are full. If space allows, please accumulate more than one full container before you request a pickup. However, do not wait until you are down to your last collection container. When you have full collection containers and would like them picked up, call, fax or email your information to us. Please also request any supplies needed at this time.

#### **By Phone:**

Call Product Care at 604-592-2972 or toll-free at 1-877-592-2972 ext.216

#### **By Email:**

Email Product Care at [alarmpickup@productcare.org](mailto:alarmpickup@productcare.org).

#### **By Fax:**

Complete the "Container Request Form" ([Appendix 2](#)). Keep a blank form and photocopy as needed. Fax the completed form to Product Care at 604-592-2982.

Whether you choose to phone, fax or email your order to us, we will send the carrier to pick up the full collection containers and deliver empty replacement ones to you if required. Ensure that you contact us ahead of time as it could take several days from the time you request a pickup to when the carrier arrives at your facilities, depending on where you are located.

#### **Mark Bill of Lading (BOL) Number on each Container**

When you request a pickup, Product Care will provide you with a bill of lading number. Write this number, visible on each container, with a thick marker, so that we can properly track and record each container associated with your collection site's shipment.

#### **Pick Up Procedures**

- 1. Review the bill of lading (shipping document), hand held info or shipping labels provided by the driver.**

When the carrier arrives at your depot, they will have either a bill of lading, shipping labels with them, or hand held scanner with pickup info. Confirm that both your address (as the shipper) and the number of pieces is correct. It is your responsibility to make sure that the information on the bill of lading, hand held device or shipping label is correct. The number of pieces to be picked up will already be recorded on the document based on your request. You cannot usually ship more than the number of pieces recorded on the bill of lading or labels. If you have more collection containers ready to ship you will need to arrange for another pickup.

- 2. Once details are confirmed correct, sign as the Shipper if signature is required.**
- 3. Keep a copy of the shipping document in your records.**





Any EMPTY collection containers ordered will be delivered by the transporter at time of pickup or separately within several days of ordering them. If you do not receive them, call 604-592-2972 or toll free 1-877-592-2972 ext.216.

## **7.2 RECORD KEEPING**

Keep copies of all bills of lading/waybills for two (2) years from date of receipt. You may receive a bill of lading/waybill when a courier delivers empty containers and/or picks up full ones.

## APPENDIX 1: COLLECTION SITE GUIDELINES REVIEW FORM

Have all collection site staff review these guidelines and sign this form. Keep a copy in your records for inspection purposes.

Date	Printed Name	Signature

## APPENDIX 2: ALARMS RECYCLING CONTAINER REQUEST FORM

Use the following form to request replacement collection containers. Please copy and print as needed.



### ALARMS PROGRAM CONTAINER REQUEST FORM

Please fax this form to: 604.592.2982  
Or email the form to: [alarmpickup@productcare.org](mailto:alarmpickup@productcare.org)

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Collection Site Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name for Driver: \_\_\_\_\_

# of Full Containers to be Picked-Up: \_\_\_\_\_

# of Empty Containers Needed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Supplies:**

Tape (for boxes) \_\_\_\_\_

Rack cards (pack of 50) \_\_\_\_\_

Posters \_\_\_\_\_

Outdoor Signage \_\_\_\_\_

Special Shipping Instructions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 3: ALARMS RECYCLING INCIDENT REPORT FORM

In the event of an incident, complete this form and submit it to Product Care within 48 hours, to [bcalarmrecycle@productcare.org](mailto:bcalarmrecycle@productcare.org) or Fax (604-592-2982)



### Alarms Collection Program – Incident Report

*Only fill out this incident report if one or more alarms are crushed*

Depot Name \_\_\_\_\_

Depot Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Incident \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Incident \_\_\_\_\_

# of Alarms Broken \_\_\_\_\_

*Please describe the incident (use additional paper if needed). Indicate how the alarm(s) was crushed, the type of alarm (s) (ionizing or photovoltaic), any exposure to resulting dust, and the steps followed for clean-up:*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Was staff wearing protective gear to clean up?       Yes  No

Was anyone injured?     Yes  No

*If yes, please attach a copy of the WCB Form and Record to this report.*

What are your suggestions to help prevent this type of incident from happening in the future?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please complete the information and fax or e-mail (and other forms if applicable) to Product Care.

The mailing address, email, fax and telephone number are:

105 West 3 <sup>rd</sup> Ave, Vancouver BC, V5Y 1E6	FAX:	604-592-2982
pickup@alarmrecycle.ca	PHONE:	1-888-811-6234

Employee Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Manager Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 4: PRODUCT CARE BOXES

Small box :

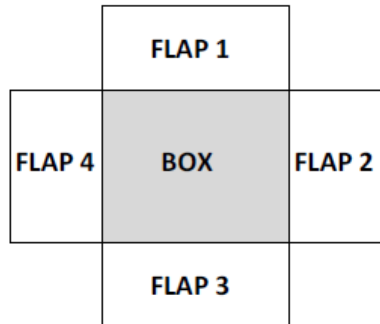


Large gaylord box :

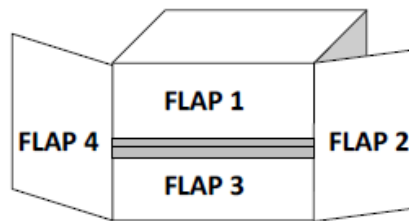


## APPENDIX 5: COLLECTION BOX ASSEMBLY

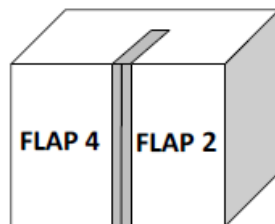
1. Start by unfolding the flattened box into a square shape:



2. Fold Flap 1 and Flap 3 over the box opening until they meet in the middle. Affix two (2) strips of packing tape down the middle of the flaps:



3. Fold Flap 2 and Flap 4 until they meet in the middle. Affix two (2) strips of packing tape down the middle of the flaps. Make sure that the strips of tape reach down the side of the box at least six (6) inches (15 cm):



4. Affix two (2) strips of packing tape along each side of the box where the flaps were closed:

