Subject: Smoke Detector Certificates

In accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 148, § 26F, the Boston Fire Department ensures that the seller of a building regulated by MGL 148, § 26E has equipped the building with approved smoke detectors.

This law is intended to capture residences built before the Massachusetts State Building Code was enacted. Please note that MGL 148, § 26E applies only to single-family to five-unit dwellings built prior to 1975. Buildings constructed after 1975 are issued a Certificate of Occupancy, which is the legal document assuring safe habitability of a dwelling.

The Boston Fire Department issues 26F certificates for transfer or sale of real estate when legally required, but does not issue certificates where not compelled to by legislation. When evidence of habitability is requested by a party involved in a real estate transaction (i.e. buyer, seller or lender) involving a dwelling built after 1975, the Certificate of Occupancy issued by the Inspectional Services Department must suffice.