Repairs and minor work to 1 and 2 family dwellings and townhouses not over 3 stories are common and need not be overly burdensome. Clarification of minimum requirements is necessary to maintain consistency and provide guidelines for installation and inspection of replacement items.

The intent of the International Residential Code is to establish minimum requirements to safeguard the public safety, health and general welfare through affordability, structural strength, means of egress facilities, stability, sanitation, light and ventilation, energy conservation and safety to life and property from fire and other hazards attributed to the built environment, and to provide safety to fire fighters and emergency responders during emergency operations.

The building official shall have the authority to render interpretations of this code and to adopt policies and procedures in order to clarify the application of its provisions. Such interpretations, policies and procedures shall be in compliance with the intent and purpose of this code.

R315.2.2 Alterations, repairs and additions: Where alterations, repairs or additions requiring a permit occur, the individual dwelling unit shall be equipped with carbon monoxide alarms located as required for new dwellings.

Exceptions:
1. Work involving the exterior surfaces of dwellings, such as the replacement of roofing or siding, or the addition or replacement of windows or doors, or the addition of a porch or deck.
2. Installation, alteration or repairs of plumbing or mechanical systems.

Confusion arises with R315.2.2 Exception 2 - Installation, alteration or repairs of plumbing or mechanical systems, when those systems are fuel fired.

The policy of the City of Knoxville Building Department, requires the installation of carbon monoxide alarms in the locations stated in R315.3, and recognizes the intent of R315.2.2 Exception 2 is to exempt plumbing or mechanical systems that are not fuel fired.

2018 International Residential Code