

CITY OF HENDERSON
BUILDING AND FIRE SAFETY
FIRE SAFETY GUIDELINE

Effective Date: July 1, 2014

HFS # 010

Supersedes: All Others

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TITLE: MONITORING RESIDENTIAL WATER FLOW ALARM SIGNALS

PURPOSE:

This guideline is intended to help the homeowner obtain the code-required approval from the *fire code official* to allow their alarm company to call fire dispatch when a water flow alarm signal is received from their residential fire sprinkler system.

BACKGROUND:

With the adoption of the 2006 and 2009 International Fire Code, changes were made restricting the ability of the homeowner to have their fire alarm system monitored by an alarm company. These restrictions were implemented due to hundreds of false alarm calls annually caused by smoke detectors, which hindered crews from responding to legitimate emergency calls in a timely manner. Additionally, these false alarms exposed firefighters to increased risk of being involved in a traffic accident and increased the need for more frequent maintenance to fire apparatus. In order to solve these issues, fire dispatch stopped accepting residential calls from fire alarm companies. However, in 2011 the City adopted an ordinance requiring all new homes to install a residential fire sprinkler system. With the addition of all of these new systems, the Fire Chief recognized the need for a procedure to allow the residential water flow alarm to be monitored by an alarm company and this signal to be forwarded to fire dispatch. Historically, water flow switches are much more reliable and less susceptible to creating false alarms than smoke detectors.

REFERENCE: 2012 IFC § 907.6.5 Exception 2 as amended

RULES & REGULATIONS

The following “sequence of events” must take place in order for water flow alarm signals in residences (one- and two-family dwellings) to be monitored and called into fire dispatch.

Step 1 (HOMEOWNER): The homeowner shall submit a letter to the *fire code official*. This letter shall include the following information:

- home address being protected;
- request permission to monitor the fire sprinkler system water flow alarm signal in accordance with 2012 IFC Section 907.6.5 Exception 2;
- request permission to install water flow switch and local audible/visual water flow alarm device(s) if desired (e.g. interior and/ or exterior horn/strobes); and
- Acknowledgement that the water flow alarm signal shall be the only signal permitted to be

called directly into Henderson Fire Dispatch from the Supervising Station.

Step 2 (CONTRACTOR): A licensed Fire Sprinkler Contractor shall obtain a fire sprinkler remodel permit (F220) to install a flow switch and inspector's test connection on the existing residential fire sprinkler riser. Interior and/or exterior horn/strobe(s) may also be installed at the owner's request. This submittal can either be:

- a "clouded" revision to the original accepted fire sprinkler shop drawings showing the new equipment being installed along with cut sheets of the new equipment, or
- a detailed "scope of work" letter along with the cut sheets for the new equipment being installed (e.g. – flow switch, horn/strobe and inspector's test and drain valve).
- A modified permit fee will be charged to cover a half hour of plan check time and a half hour of inspection time.

NOTE – The inspector's test connection shall be capable of simulating the flow of one fire sprinkler with the smallest orifice size on the system.

Step 3 (CONTRACTOR): An approved Supervising Station shall obtain a monitoring permit (F150) to monitor the fire sprinkler water flow signal and other signals as requested by the homeowner. This submittal shall include:

- a "scope of work" cover letter;
- cut sheets of any new monitoring equipment to be installed; and
- copies of the data screen printouts from the Supervising Station showing:
 - property address,
 - signals/zones being monitored, and
 - phone call lists for each signal received.
- A modified permit fee will be charged to cover a half hour of plan check time and a half hour of inspection time

NOTE - Only the water flow alarm signal shall be called directly into HFD Dispatch @ 267-4913. All other signals shall be confirmed (through on-site verification) either by someone on-site or by supervising station runner service personnel before calling 911.

Step 4 (HOMEOWNER & CONTRACTORS): Final inspection shall be coordinated by the homeowner and scheduled with COH Fire Inspector to verify proper installation of the flow switch and inspector's test connection as well as to witness the acceptance test of any notification appliances installed, the water flow alarm signal, and any other signals with the Supervising Station.
