

San Diego Fire-Rescue Department

Retroactive Fire Alarm Provisions

Background

California Fire Code

1113.12.1 General

*Every **apartment house three or more stories in height or containing more than 15 apartments, every hotel three or more stories in height or containing 20 or more guest rooms, shall have installed therein an automatic or manually operated fire alarm system. Such fire alarm systems shall be so designed that all occupants of the building may be warned simultaneously and shall be in accordance with the California Fire Code. See Section 1114.14 for special requirements in buildings over 75 feet (22 860 mm) in height.***



Summary

- This code applies to apartments, hotels and motels existing on January 1, 1975 where sleeping rooms are located above the ground floor.
 - **Apartments** 3 or more stories in height or containing > 15 apartments
 - **Hotels/Motels** 3 or more stories in height or containing 20 or more guest rooms

Exceptions to this Requirement

Exception: A fire alarm system need not be installed provided such apartment house or hotel is separated by an unpierced wall of not less than four-hour fire resistance in buildings of Type IA, Type IIB, Type III or Type IV construction and two-hour fire-resistance in buildings of all other types of construction provided:

- Areas do not exceed the number of apartments or guest rooms stipulated.
 - The fire-resistive wall conforms to the requirements of Section 706.6 of the California Building Code
 - The wall complies with all other applicable provisions of the California Building Code.
 - The wall extends to all outer edges of horizontal projecting elements, such as balconies, roof overhangs, canopies, marquees or architectural projections.
 - No openings are permitted for air ducts or similar penetrations, except that openings for pipes, conduits and electrical outlets of copper, sheet steel or ferrous material shall be permitted through such wall and need not be protected, provided they do not unduly impair the required fire resistance of the assembly.
 - Tolerances around such penetrations shall be filled with approved noncombustible materials.
- **4-hr** fire rated wall for Type IA, Type IIB, Type III or Type IV construction
 - **2-hr** fire rated wall for all other construction types
 - Wall must meet requirements of section 706.6 of CBC
 - Fire areas must not exceed number of apartments or guest rooms stipulated

Exceptions

- If you feel that you meet the exception to this requirement
 - Provide stamped set of plans to the Deputy Fire Marshal
 - We do not need a full set of plans
 - Preferred if only pertinent pages are sent
 - Pertinent pages include:
 - Plan view showing location of walls separating units
 - Details page showing wall construction and rating (2 or 4 hr)
 - Plans for each floor showing continuation of wall from ground floor to roof level
 - Plans can be sent electronically as pdf – Please do not send pictures of plans

What type of Fire Alarm is required?

An automatic or manually operated fire alarm system shall be provided so that all occupants of the building will be warned simultaneously

Manual

- Requires human intervention



Automatic

- Does not require human intervention



It Depends...

Installation Requirements

Initiating Devices

- Manual Fire Alarm Boxes
- Automatic smoke detectors
- Automatic sprinkler system waterflow devices (if present)
- Automatic fire extinguishing Systems (if present)

Notification Appliances

- Audible Alarm notification in every occupiable space
- Low frequency horns in sleeping areas
- Visible Alarms in public use areas/units designated for hearing impaired

Monitoring

- Fire Alarm Systems are required to be monitored by an approved supervising station in accordance with the CFC and NFPA 72.
- An ongoing contract to monitor the fire alarm system is required

Closing Out Your Fire Inspection

Initial Inspection

- Deputy Fire Marshal will identify a property requiring an alarm and issue a notice on the report
- Several months will be given to obtain project number

Project Number

- Proof of project number with DSD will allow DFM to close inspection report.
- A time of completion will be established based on the size/scope of the project
 - Permits have been extended up to 24 months with an additional 12 months with 1 inspection

Completion of Project

- DFM will follow up to verify Fire Alarm has been installed
- Stamped/approved plans will be verified and saved electronically.

Permit Process

Plan your Project

- Work with a licensed contractor to develop plans for your property
- <https://www.sandiego.gov/development-services/permits/fire-permit>
- Informational Bulletin 506

Apply for a Permit

- Complete and submit necessary forms to DSD
- All plans are now submitted online through OpenDSD Interface
- Contractors should be familiar with this process and they are typically the ones submitting the permits, not the property owners

Complete Permit

- Work with DSD inspectors to complete all permit requirements
- Keep stamped/approved permit for your records and provide a copy to SDFD



Questions???