
Miami - Dade County
Code of Ordinances
Part III. Code Of Ordinances
Chapter 14. Fire Prevention
Article III. South Florida Fire Prevention Code

§ 14-66. Fire alarms

- (1) *Purpose.* The purpose of this section is to seek to obtain proper installation, operation, maintenance, testing, and supervision of fire alarm systems and to seek to obtain compliance with Chapter 633, Florida Statutes, the Florida Fire Prevention Code, the Florida Administrative Code Rule 69A-48 and Rule 69A-60, NFPA 72 (2002 Edition) National Fire Alarm Code, NFPA 13 (2002 Edition) Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems and this section.

(2) *Scope of regulation.* The provisions of this section shall apply to all fire alarm systems, except one- and two-family dwelling unit fire alarm systems, within the geographical area of Miami-Dade County.

(3) *Definitions applicable to Section 14-66 and Section 14-67 of this Code.*

(a) *Alarm Signal.* A signal indicating an emergency that requires immediate action including, but not limited to, a signal indicative of fire.

(b) *Annunciator.* A unit containing one or more indicator lamps, alphanumeric displays, or other equivalent means in which each indication provides status information about a circuit, condition, or location.

(c) *Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ).* The chief fire official responsible for approving equipment, materials, an installation, or a procedure.

(d) *Central Station.* A supervising station that is listed for central station service.

(e) *Central Station Fire Alarm System.* A system or group of systems in which the operations of circuits and devices are transmitted automatically to, recorded in, maintained by, and supervised from a listed central station that has competent and experienced servers and operators who, upon receipt of a signal, take such action as required by this Code. Such service is to be controlled and operated by a person, firm, or corporation whose business is the furnishing, maintaining, or monitoring of supervised fire alarm systems.

(f) *Central Station Service.* The use of a system or a group of systems in which the operations of circuits and devices at a protected property are signaled to, recorded in, and supervised from a listed central station that has competent and experienced operators who, upon receipt of a signal, take such action as required by this Code. Related activities at the protected property, such as equipment installation, inspection, testing, maintenance, and runner service, are the responsibility of the central station or a listed fire alarm service local company.

(g) *Certificate (Certificated).* Posted verification of a systematic program that uses randomly selected follow-up inspections of the certificated systems installed under the program that allows the listing organization to verify that a fire alarm system complies with all the requirements of NFPA 72 (2002 Edition) National Fire Alarm Code. A system installed under such a program is identified by the issuance of a certificate and is designated as a certificated system.

(h) *Combination System.* A fire alarm system in which components are used, in whole or in part, in common with a non-fire signaling system.

(i) *Fire Department Notification.* The immediate and automatic notification of the local fire jurisdiction by electronic means in accordance with NFPA 72 (2002 Edition) National Fire Alarm Code, that a fire alarm signal has been reported to the fire alarm system.

(j) *Evacuation Signal.* A distinctive signal intended to be recognized by the occupants as requiring evacuation of the building or zone.

(k) *Fire Alarm Control Unit (Fire Alarm Control Panel)*. A system component that receives inputs from automatic and manual fire alarm devices and might supply power to detection devices and to a transponder(s) or off-premises transmitter(s). The control unit might also provide transfer of power to the notification appliances and transfer of condition to relays or devices connected to the control unit. The fire alarm control unit can be a local fire alarm control unit or a master control unit.

(l) *Fire Alarm Signal*. A signal initiated by a fire alarm-initiating device such as a manual fire alarm box, automatic fire detector, water flow switch, or other device in which activation is indicative of the presence of a fire or a fire signature.

(m) *Fire Alarm System*. A system or portion of a combination system that consists of components and circuits arranged to monitor and annunciate the status of fire alarm or supervisory signal-initiating devices and to initiate the appropriate response to those signals.

(n) *Listed*. Equipment, materials, or services included in a list published by an organization that is acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction and concerned with evaluation of products or services, that maintains periodic inspection of production of listed equipment or materials or periodic evaluation of services, and whose listing states that either the equipment, material, or service meets appropriate designated standards or has been tested and found suitable for a specified purpose.

(o) *Master Control Unit (Panel)*. A control unit that serves the protected premises or portion of the protected premises as a local control unit and accepts inputs from other fire alarm control units.

(p) *Nuisance Alarm*. Any alarm caused by mechanical failure, malfunction, improper installation, or lack of proper maintenance, or any alarm activated by a cause that cannot be determined.

(q) *Placard (Placarded)*. A means to signify that the fire alarm system of a particular facility is receiving central station service in accordance with NFPA 72 (2002 Edition) National Fire Alarm Code by a listed central station or listed fire alarm service-local company that is part of a systematic follow-up program under the control of an independent third-party listing organization or a nationally recognized testing laboratory.

(r) *Proprietary Supervising Station*. A location to which alarm or supervisory signaling devices on proprietary fire alarm systems are connected and where personnel are in attendance at all times to supervise operation and investigate all signals.

(s) *Proprietary Supervising Station Fire Alarm System*. An installation of fire alarm systems that serves contiguous and noncontiguous properties, under one ownership, from a proprietary supervising station located at the protected property, or at one of multiple non-contiguous protected properties, at which trained, competent personnel are in constant attendance.

(t) *Protected Premises*. The physical location protected by a fire alarm system.

(u) *Protected Premises (Local) Fire Alarm System*. A protected premises system that sounds an alarm at the protected premises as the result of the manual operation of a fire alarm box or the operation of protection equipment or systems including, but not limited to, water flowing in a sprinkler system, the discharge of carbon dioxide, the detection of smoke, or the detection of heat.

(v) *Remote Supervising Station Fire Alarm System*. A system installed in accordance with this Code to transmit alarm, supervisory, and trouble signals from one or more protected premises to a remote location where appropriate action is taken.

(w) *Runner*. A fire alarm service technician who is qualified to inspect, test and maintain fire alarm systems in accordance with NFPA 72 (2002 Edition) National Fire Alarm Code, who is licensed pursuant to Chapter 489 Part II, Florida Statutes, and who is available at all times to respond to signals at a protected premises.

(x) *Runner Service*. The service provided by a runner at the protected premises, including resetting and silencing of all equipment transmitting fire alarm or supervisory signals to an off-premises location and the restoration or repair of the fire alarm system.

(y) *Signal*. A status indication communicated by electrical or other means.

(z) *Sprinkler system*. For fire protection purposes, an integrated system of underground and overhead piping designed in accordance with fire protection engineering standards. The installation

includes one or more automatic water supplies. The portion of the sprinkler system aboveground is a network of specially sized or hydraulically designed piping installed in a building, structure, or area, generally overhead, and to which sprinklers are attached in a systematic pattern. The valve controlling each system riser is located in the system riser or its supply piping. Each sprinkler system riser includes a device for actuating an alarm when the system is in operation. The system is usually activated by heat from a fire and discharges water over the fire area.

(aa) *Supervision*. The monitoring of supervisory signals by qualified personnel from an approved monitoring facility in compliance with NFPA 72 (2002 Edition) National Fire Alarm Code.

(bb) *Supervisory Signal*. A signal indicating the need for action in connection with the supervision of guard tours, the fire suppression systems or equipment, or the maintenance features of related systems.

(cc) *Supervising Station*. A facility that receives signals and at which personnel are in attendance at all times to respond to these signals.

(dd) *Supervisory Service*. The service required to monitor performance of guard tours and the operative condition of fixed suppression systems or other systems for the protection of life and property.

(ee) *Third-Party Verification Organization*. An independent organization providing published standards for the operation and administration of a listed central station service program that is acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction and that operates in accordance with NFPA 72 (2002 Edition) National Fire Alarm Code in providing a system for the verification and listing of fire alarm systems for central station service and which provides a certificate or placard indicating compliance.

(ff) *Trouble Signal*. A signal initiated by the fire alarm system or device indicative of a fault in a monitored circuit or component.

(4) **Runner Service and Service Contracts**. All fire alarm systems shall be required to have in effect at all times a service contract with a licensed fire alarm service contractor, a listed fire alarm service-local company or a listed central station to provide all maintenance, service and testing as required by this Code.

(a) The service contract shall include a provision for runner service available to respond to the protected premises at any and all times within two (2) hours of notification of the runner service of any alarm or supervisory signal, and within four (4) hours of notification of any trouble signal. Existing fire alarm systems shall comply with Section 14-66(4) of this Code not later than five hundred forty-five (545) days after the effective date of this ordinance. The authority having jurisdiction shall have the authority to extend the time for compliance with Section 14-66(4) of this Code for existing fire alarm systems to not later than one thousand ninety-five (1,095) days after the effective date of this ordinance if the authority having jurisdiction determines that compliance within five hundred forty-five (545) days is not reasonable under all the facts and circumstances.

1. The runner shall restore the fire alarm system to complete working order.

2. In the event that the runner cannot restore the fire alarm system to complete working order, the building, structure, or occupancy may be subject to certain limitations, conditions, and restrictions, including fire watch requirements, as determined by the authority having jurisdiction.

(b) Posting requirements. A fire alarm user shall conspicuously post at the main entrance to the alarm user's premises a notice stating: (1) the name of an individual or alarm company able and authorized to enter the premises and deactivate the alarm; (2) emergency telephone numbers by which those individuals can be reached at all times; and (3) the name and address of the alarm user. The information must be kept current and failure to update this information within forty-eight (48) hours of any change constitutes a violation of this section.

(c) The runner at all times shall be provided with a key or other means of accessing the fire alarm control panel at any time.

(d) The licensed fire alarm service contractor, listed fire alarm service-local company or listed central station shall provide to the authority having jurisdiction written notification in such form and manner as approved by the authority having jurisdiction not less than thirty (30) days prior to the termination, cancellation, or expiration of the service contract and shall not terminate the services required by the

contract for any reason until thirty (30) days after said notification has been received by the authority having jurisdiction.

(5) **Serviceability.** All fire alarm systems shall be maintained fully functional at all times and all deficiencies shall be reported to the authority having jurisdiction in writing in accordance with Florida Administrative Code Rule 69A-48, and shall be repaired not later than four (4) hours after the fire alarm system is out of service or not later than a time determined by the authority having jurisdiction.

(6) *Evacuation Signals.* All fire alarm systems providing evacuation signals shall provide audible notification signals at the sound pressure levels required in NFPA 72 (2002 Edition) National Fire Alarm Code.

(a) Existing fire alarm systems not meeting a minimum sound pressure level of at least 15 dBA above the average ambient sound level, or 5 dBA above the maximum sound level having a duration of at least sixty seconds, whichever is greater, measured 1.5 meters above the floor in the occupiable area, using the A-weighted scale (dBA), may be required by the authority having jurisdiction to upgrade the audibility of the fire alarm system to meet all of the requirements set forth in NFPA 72 (2002 Edition) National Fire Alarm Code. The minimum sound level in sleeping rooms or areas with all intervening barriers closed shall be 70 dBA. Fire alarm systems not meeting the 70 dBA standard may be required by the authority having jurisdiction to upgrade the audibility of the system to meet the requirements set forth in NFPA 72 (2002 Edition) National Fire Alarm Code.

(b) If the authority having jurisdiction reasonably believes that an existing fire alarm system does not provide adequate sound pressure levels to accomplish evacuation notification then the authority having jurisdiction may, in the discretion of the authority having jurisdiction, require that the user of the existing fire alarm system provide to the authority having jurisdiction a signed, written report in such form and manner as approved by the authority having jurisdiction from a fire alarm contractor licensed to service fire alarm systems in Miami-Dade County setting forth the sound pressure levels (dBA) throughout the building. The fire alarm system user shall provide the signed, written report to the authority having jurisdiction not later than sixty (60) days after receipt of written notification from the authority having jurisdiction to provide the signed written report.

(7) *Annunciators and Fire Alarm Control Units.* All protected premises shall be required to have the fire alarm control unit or a remote annunciator located in the building lobby near the main entrance, or, if there is no main entrance or lobby, in a common area where the fire alarm control unit or remote annunciator can be seen and heard by the occupants of the building, structure, or occupancy, or shall be located in another location approved by the authority having jurisdiction.

(a) Existing remote supervising station fire alarm systems which are otherwise in compliance with this section may be exempted from the provisions of Section 14-66(7) of this Code by the authority having jurisdiction when it is determined by the authority having jurisdiction that a reasonable degree of safety is provided without the addition of a remote annunciator.

(8) *Supervising Stations.* All supervising stations shall be listed by a third-party verification organization acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction.

(9) *New Installations.* All new fire alarm systems and all new sprinkler systems with supervision or emergency forces notification shall meet the requirements for central station service or proprietary supervising station fire alarm systems and shall be either a certificated or placarded central station fire alarm system as set forth in NFPA 72 (2002 Edition) National Fire Alarm Code or a listed proprietary supervising fire alarm system.

(a) Verification of compliance with the requirements of this section with respect to the installation of new fire alarm systems, as implemented in accordance with the applicable code(s), specifications, or other criteria applicable to the specific installation, shall be certified by a third-party verification organization acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction and shall be evidenced by a certificate or placard.

(b) The user of all new fire alarm systems and new sprinkler systems with supervision or emergency forces notification shall at all times conspicuously post a certificate or a placard on or within thirty-six (36) inches of the fire alarm control unit, as set forth in NFPA 72 (2002 Edition) National Fire Alarm Code.

(10) *Upgrades, Renovation, Additions, Repairs, or Modernization.* Any upgrade, renovation, addition,

repair, or modernization of any existing fire alarm system which includes the replacement of the master control unit with anything other than the exact make and model as the existing master control unit or which includes the addition of a fire alarm control panel which will provide or replace any of the functions of the existing master control unit, except notification, shall be required to have the complete fire alarm system in compliance with all the requirements for new installations. If an upgrade, renovation, addition, repair, or modernization includes greater than one-half of the entire fire alarm system, then the entire fire alarm system shall be required to be in compliance with Section 14-66 (9) of this Code.

(11) *Proprietary Supervising Station Fire Alarm Systems.*

(a) All proprietary supervising station fire alarm systems shall be listed by a third party verification organization.

(b) Existing proprietary supervising station fire alarm systems shall comply with subsection (11)(a) hereinabove not later than five hundred forty-five (545) days after the effective date of this ordinance.

(12) **False Alarms, Inoperable Systems, Remedy of Existing Systems.** Any existing fire alarm system determined by the authority having jurisdiction to be inoperable for any reason, unless the system has been reported to the authority having jurisdiction and is in the process of actively being repaired, or a fire alarm system which has caused more than four nuisance alarms within any three hundred sixty-five (365) day period, shall be required to upgrade the fire alarm system to be in compliance with the new fire alarm requirements set forth in NFPA 101 (2003 Edition) Life Safety Code and Section 14-66(9) of this Code.

(Ord. No. 08-27, § 1, 3-4-08)

http://miamidade.fl.elaws.us/code/coor_ptiii_ch14_artiii_sec14-66