



Fire Marshal's Notice

December 2013

State Fire Marshal Reminder Related to Remote Monitoring of Fire Button Enabled Burglar Alarm Systems

It has come to the attention of the State Fire Marshal's Office that some security systems with enabled fire panic buttons may not be monitored in accordance with adopted standards; in that the systems may not be set up to transmit the required test signal at least monthly. This may be due, in part, to misunderstandings related to the licensing exemption afforded to certain security companies in the Texas Insurance Code. The following is offered as clarification and as a reminder of the importance to remain in complete compliance with all provisions, rules, regulations and/or statutes enacted to regulate the planning, certifying, leasing, selling, servicing, installing, monitoring, and maintaining of fire detection and fire alarm devices and systems in Texas.

Licensing Exemption

The licensing provisions related to engaging in the fire alarm business do not apply to an individual or organization licensed to install or service burglar alarms under Chapter 1702, Occupations Code, that provides and installs in a single-family or two-family residence a combination keypad that includes a panic button to initiate a fire alarm signal if the fire alarm signal: (A) is monitored by a registered fire alarm firm; and (B) is not initiated by a fire or smoke detection device. *Texas Insurance Code Sec. 6002.155.(11)*

This section exempts a security company installing this type system from being licensed for fire alarm, but does not exempt the installation and monitoring from being provided in accordance with adopted standards.

Remote Monitoring / Test Signals

NFPA 72 (National Fire Alarm Code) specifies the performance requirements for remote monitoring of alarm signals from household systems. Included in this, is the requirement that each alarm transmitter shall automatically initiate and complete a test signal transmission sequence at least monthly.

NFPA 72 (2013) - 29.7.9.1 & 26.6.3.2.1.5(6)

In setting up these accounts, the supervising station must ensure that adopted standards are followed and the automatic test signals are enabled. Failure to receive a test signal is treated as a trouble signal and the station operator must initiate action appropriate to the type of service being provided (central station, remote station). **The subscriber and/or the installing firm cannot waive these requirements.**

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