



Frequently Asked Questions Sections 14-66 and 14-67 Code of Miami-Dade County

Note: Wherever possible, the pertinent code section follows the answer to the question so that the reader may easily refer to the specific code. Any notices, letters, or FAQ's are not the code and are included as a quick reference for your convenience. Please see the specific code section for the definitive answer to your question.

What is the purpose of the new fire alarm ordinance?

Sections 14-66 and 14-67 are added to the Code to require fire alarm and fire sprinkler monitoring systems to have maintenance agreements and licensed technicians to respond to malfunctions and alarm conditions. This ordinance will require owners of commercial buildings, where alarm or sprinkler systems are required, to establish a contract with a licensed alarm contractor to provide maintenance and response by a qualified technician.

The purpose of the ordinance is to enhance the reliability of critical life safety systems, primarily fire alarm and fire sprinkler monitoring systems, by increasing maintenance and providing a runner service to reset and repair non-functional systems. Improving reliability of life safety systems will significantly reduce the number and length of required fire watch patrols, reduce the costs associated with major repairs, reduce the number of nuisance alarms (false alarms) and fines for multiple false alarms.

When was the ordinance adopted?

The ordinance was adopted on March 4, 2008 and effective March 14, 2008.

When must existing systems comply?

The existing fire alarm systems must comply no later than September 14, 2009. § 14-66 (4) (a)

What systems are affected by the Fire Alarm Ordinance?

All fire alarm systems, except one and two family dwellings fire alarm systems, new and existing, whether they are or are not monitored (supervised). § 14-66 (2)

- protected premises (local) fire alarm systems
- remote supervising station fire alarm systems

- central station fire alarm systems, and proprietary supervising station fire alarm systems
- fire alarm systems that only monitor fire suppression systems such as sprinklers and fire pumps
- Non-required or elective monitoring of fire alarm systems must comply with the ordinance. While the ordinance affects all of the above mentioned systems not all of the provisions apply in the same way to every system

See also Definitions § 14-66 (3)

What must the owner of a fire alarm system do to comply?

Contract with a licensed fire alarm service company for a service contract that includes all required maintenance and testing and includes runner service (technician) available to respond 24/7. § 14-66 (4) (a)

Post the following information near the main entrance or other location approved by the Fire Department: (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. § 14-10 (4) or 14-66 (4) (b)

Provide the service company with a key or other means of accessing the fire alarm control panel at any time. § 14-66 (4) (c)

Post the certificate or placard at the main fire alarm control panel for Central Station Service fire alarm systems. § 14-66 (4) (b)

Maintain any sprinkler or fire suppression systems in accordance with NFPA 25. § 14-66 (5) and § 14-67 (4)

Are all fire alarm systems required to be monitored?

No, monitoring is required for some occupancies by the Florida Fire Prevention Code and other provisions of the Code, but this ordinance does not order monitoring by itself.

How are sprinkler systems affected?

All new sprinkler systems must be monitored by a fire alarm even if the Florida Fire Prevention Code does not require monitoring. § 14-67 (3)

How are fire suppression systems affected?

All fire suppression systems required to be monitored by the Florida Fire Prevention Code or another code or standard, and all fire suppression systems electing to be monitored are subject to the fire alarm provisions of the ordinance. § 14-67 (4)

Does the ordinance require existing fire sprinkler systems and fire suppression systems to be monitored?

No, existing systems can remain unmonitored if permitted by code.

Does the ordinance require all fire alarm systems to have service contracts and runner service?

Yes, all systems require service contracts and runner service even if they are not monitored. Existing systems must have a service contract and runner service by September 14, 2009. § 14-66 (4)

Does the ordinance require all fire sprinkler and fire suppression systems to have service contracts and runner service?

No, only fire alarms require service contracts and runner service. The maintenance and testing of fire sprinkler and fire suppression systems is covered in NFPA 25, *Standard for the Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance of Water-Based Fire Protection Systems*. §14-67 (4)

How will the alarm company know if they need to dispatch a runner to a local system that is not monitored?

The ordinance requires specific contact information to be posted at the main entrance of the building or in another location as approved by the fire department. This provides the occupants of the building and any responding emergency personnel with the contact information of the alarm servicing company. A building occupant, property manager or the fire department will have to notify the alarm servicing company on any alarm, trouble or supervisory signals and the alarm servicing company will have to respond in the appropriate time.

Will remote supervising fire alarm systems be required to dispatch the runner service?

Yes, the remote supervising station must be receiving alarm, trouble, and supervisory signals in order to notify the fire alarm servicing company so that they can dispatch a runner. Many remote supervising stations do not receive or report trouble and supervisory signals to anyone. The systems and the monitoring contracts will have to be revised to allow these functions to take place and to require the fire alarm service company to be contacted.

How fast must the alarm servicing company respond?

The runner must arrive at the property within 2 hours for all alarm and supervisory signals and within 4 hours on all trouble signals. Failure to respond within these required times could result in fines for the building owner or occupants. Runner service shall be available at all hours of the day and night, seven days a week (24/7) including holidays. § 14-66 (4) (a)

How will the runner gain access to the fire alarm control panel?

Section 4 c) of the ordinance requires that the runner will have access to the fire alarm control panel at all times by a key or other means. Consult with the local Fire Department for other approved options. § 14-66 (4) (c)

Are all fire alarm systems required to be central station service?

No, only new monitored fire alarm systems are required to be central station service systems. This requirement also applies to new fire alarm systems which are electively (not required by code) being monitored. § 14-66 (9)

Are all fire alarm systems required to be certificated or placarded?

No, only central station fire alarm systems and proprietary supervising station fire alarm systems must have a certificate or placard posted at the fire alarm control panel. This placard or certificate is in addition to the required posting at the main entrance. Existing proprietary supervising station systems must be certificated or placarded by September 14, 2009. § 14-66 (9)

Will existing monitored fire alarm systems be required to be central station systems?

No, not unless they meet the criteria in § 14-66 (10) of the ordinance for systems that have been upgraded, repaired, or renovated or they meet the criteria in § 14-66 (12) of the ordinance for inoperable systems or excessive false alarms. The addition of power boosters or NAC panels to add notification devices will not necessarily trigger an upgrade requiring central stations service. However, replacement of the fire alarm control panel could require a complete upgrade of the system which would then have to be central station service.

Do sprinkler systems and fire suppression systems require a certificate or placard?

No, only fire alarm systems that are central station systems or proprietary supervising station systems require the certificate or placard. § 14-67 (3) and (4)

Must the monitoring company which receives the fire alarm signals be listed? Yes, the ordinance requires that all supervising stations shall be listed by a third party verification organization acceptable to the Authority Having Jurisdiction (Fire Department). This includes all remote supervising stations, central stations and proprietary supervising stations located anywhere in the country. Existing supervising stations monitoring buildings in the geographical area of Miami-Dade County must comply by September 14, 2009.

Must all fire alarm systems have the fire alarm control panel or a remote annunciator at the main entrance? Yes, 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 panel or remote annunciator can be seen and heard by the occupants of the building. The Fire Department can grant an exception to this requirement for existing remote supervising station fire alarm systems. § 14-66 (7)

Is there a minimum audibility level for existing fire alarm systems? Yes, the required audibility level of a fire alarm system is dictated by NFPA 72 in the edition under which it was installed as new. Existing systems installed prior to the adoption of the 2002 edition of NFPA 72, that do not meet the minimum sound pressure levels contained in section 6 of the ordinance, may be required to upgrade to meet the required sound pressure levels contained in the ordinance at the discretion of the local A.H.J.