



**North Collier Fire control and Rescue District
Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) Guidelines for Successful Review or Inspection**

Article Number	FAL 22-010
Effective Date	August 8, 2022
Subject	Existing Building Fire Alarm System
Objective	Clarify the Minimum Standard an Existing Building's Fire Alarm System is expected to Meet When a Panel Needs Replacement

BACKGROUND

Confusion surrounds requirements for fire alarm systems in existing buildings when a panel needs replacement due to outdated equipment. Per the Florida Fire Prevention Code (FFPC) requirements, the AHJ's direction is to comply with a reasonable degree of safety and permit an approved system that is no less conforming than when the building was constructed.

PROCEDURE/GUIDELINE

In order to provide consistency and a reasonable approach to enforcing the adopted codes, it has been determined that the following be required to meet minimum standards:

- IF the new fire alarm panel (different make, model, etc.) is cross compatible with existing devices without adding contacts, modules, or any other device ensuring integration, the building would not have to be brought to current code.
- IF the proposed control panel is a direct replacement and is confirmed by the manufacturer for the existing panel and the existing devices being compatible without adding contacts, modules or any other device ensuring integration, the building would not have to be brought up to current code.
- Existing fire alarm conductor type previously approved for the building will be permitted to remain if in good condition and capable of supporting system design calculations.
- The new fire alarm panel shall be installed in an enclosed room if available and climate control area per manufacturer's specifications.
- Exterior horns if provided shall be updated with horn/strobe devices complying with visual and audible notification.
- Exterior devices (horn/strobe, pull station, heat detector) shall be updated with exterior weatherproof devices of such kind.
- In accordance with the FFPC, NFPA 101: Chapter 31 Existing Apartment Buildings, 31.3.4.5 Smoke Alarms, all buildings will need installed or *Verified* prior installation of unit smoke alarms in the immediate area outside each sleeping room and inside each sleeping room (smoke alarms by code are permitted to be battery powered for existing buildings). NCFR recommends the interconnection of smoke alarms.

- Emergency Forces Notification shall be in compliance with FFPC, NFPA 101: 31.3.4.3.5. IF required by code, monitoring for the fire alarm system shall be upgraded to an approved method in accordance with NFAP 72: 26.6.4.1.4 (cellular or radio dialer).
- A Knox box shall be installed at each building that contains a fire alarm system. An existing NCFD lock box in good and operable condition may remain in place.

Applicability: This policy shall be applicable to all circumstances when a fire alarm panel needs replacement due to non-functioning equipment. A fire alarm permit is required pursuant to the FFPC, NFPA 1: 1.12.8.

Code References: Florida State Statute 633.202(13); FFPC (NFPA 1 & 101); NFPA 72
