

2021 Virginia Construction Code

CHAPTER 9 FIRE PROTECTION AND LIFE SAFETY SYSTEMS

SECTION 901 GENERAL

901.1 Scope.

The provisions of this chapter shall specify where fire protection and *life safety systems* are required and shall apply to the design, installation and operation of *fire protection and life safety systems*.

901.2 Fire protection systems.

Fire protection and life safety systems shall be installed, repaired, operated and maintained in accordance with this code and the *International Fire Code*.

Any *fire protection or life safety system* for which an exception or reduction to the provisions of this code has been granted shall be considered to be a required system.

Exception: Any *fire protection or life safety system* or portion thereof not required by this code shall be permitted to be installed for partial or complete protection provided that such system meets the requirements of this code.

901.3 Modifications.

Persons shall not remove or modify any *fire protection system* installed or maintained under the provisions of this code or the *International Fire Code* without approval by the *building official*.

901.4 Threads.

Threads provided for fire department connections to sprinkler systems, standpipes, yard hydrants or any other fire hose connection shall be compatible with the connections used by the local fire department.

901.5 Acceptance tests.

Fire protection systems shall be tested in accordance with the requirements of this code and the *International Fire Code*. Where required, the tests shall be conducted in the presence of the *building official*. Tests required by this code, the *International Fire Code* and the standards listed in this code shall be conducted at the expense of the *owner* or the *owner's* authorized agent. It shall be unlawful to occupy portions of a structure until the required *fire protection systems* within that portion of the structure have been tested and *approved*.

901.6 Supervisory service.

Where required, *fire protection systems* shall be monitored by an approved supervising station in accordance with *NFPA 72*.

901.6.1 Automatic sprinkler systems.

Automatic sprinkler systems shall be monitored by an *approved* supervising station.

Exceptions:

1. A supervising station is not required for *automatic sprinkler systems* protecting one- and two-family dwellings.
2. Limited area systems in accordance with [Section 903.3.8](#).

[F] 901.6.2 Integrated testing.

Where two or more *fire protection or life safety systems* are interconnected, the intended response of subordinate *fire protection and life safety systems* shall be verified when required testing of the initiating system is conducted. In addition, integrated testing shall be performed in accordance with [Sections 901.6.2.1](#) and [901.6.2.2](#).

[F] 901.6.2.1 High-rise buildings.

For high-rise buildings, integrated testing shall comply with *NFPA 4*, with an integrated test performed prior to issuance of the certificate of occupancy and at intervals not exceeding 10 years, unless otherwise specified by an integrated system test plan prepared in accordance with *NFPA 4*. If an equipment failure is detected during integrated testing, a repeat of the integrated test shall not be required, except as necessary to verify operation of *fire protection or life safety functions* that are initiated by equipment that was repaired or replaced.

[F] 901.6.2.2 Smoke control systems.

Where a fire alarm system is integrated with a smoke control system as outlined in [Section 909](#), integrated testing shall comply with *NFPA 4*, with an integrated test performed prior to issuance of the certificate of occupancy and at intervals not exceeding 10 years, unless otherwise specified by an integrated system test plan prepared in accordance with *NFPA 4*. If an equipment failure is detected during integrated testing, a repeat of the integrated test shall not be required, except as necessary to verify operation of *fire protection or life safety functions* that are initiated by equipment that was repaired or replaced.

Copyright © 2024 International Code Council, Inc., or its licensors (ALL RIGHTS RESERVED).

Accessed by Venkatesh Shanmugam on 11/13/2024 pursuant to License Agreement with ICC. No further reproduction or distribution authorized. Any Unauthorized reproduction or distribution is a violation of the federal copyright, and subject to civil and criminal penalties thereunder.

901.6.3 Fire alarm systems.

Fire alarm systems required by the provisions of [Section 907.2](#) of this code and [Sections 907.2](#) and [907.9](#) of the *International Fire Code* shall be monitored by an *approved* supervising station in accordance with [Section 907.6.6](#) of this code.

Exceptions:

1. Single- and multiple-station smoke alarms required by [Section 907.2.11](#).
2. Smoke detectors in Group I-3 occupancies.
3. Supervisory service is not required for *automatic sprinkler systems* in one- and two-family dwellings.

901.6.4 Group H.

Supervision and monitoring of emergency alarm, detection and *automatic fire-extinguishing systems* in Group H occupancies shall be in accordance with the *International Fire Code*.

901.7 Fire areas.

Where buildings, or portions thereof, are divided into *fire areas* so as not to exceed the limits established for requiring a *fire protection system* in accordance with this chapter, such *fire areas* shall be separated by *fire walls* constructed in accordance with [Section 706](#), *fire barriers* constructed in accordance with [Section 707](#), or *horizontal assemblies* constructed in accordance with [Section 711](#), or a combination thereof having a *fire-resistance rating* of not less than that determined in accordance with [Section 707.3.10](#).