



State Fire Marshal's Notice

May 2014

Licensing Requirements Related to Sound Sensors for Smoke Alarms in 1- and 2- Family Dwellings

The State Fire Marshal's Office continues to receive questions related to a new wireless device that senses the alarm sound from existing smoke alarms in a house and transmits the signal to a central monitoring station. 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 Requirements

These sound sensing devices are installed adjacent to existing smoke alarms and are intended to notify the homeowner and monitoring facility that a fire alarm device has been activated within the residence. The monitoring facility then takes appropriate action, including notifying the local fire department to dispatch emergency service. That being the case, these devices fall within the scope of the Fire Detection and Alarm Device statute (Texas Insurance Code, Chapter 6002) and related rules.

When these devices are installed by a contractor, the company must be registered for fire alarm through the State Fire Marshal's Office and the installing technician must hold at least a residential fire alarm technician license.

The monitoring station must also be registered for fire alarm monitoring through the State Fire Marshal's Office.

Listed Equipment

The fire alarm statute includes a provision that supplementary devices are not required to be listed by a nationally recognized testing laboratory if they are approved by the local authority having jurisdiction. *TIC 6002.251.(d)*

Monthly Test of Alarm Signal to Remote Monitoring Station

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 alarm dealer and 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 (homeowner) and/or the alarm dealer cannot waive these requirements.**