

450-RICR-00-00-10

TITLE 450 – FIRE SAFETY CODE BOARD OF APPEAL AND REVIEW

CHAPTER 00 – N/A

SUBCHAPTER 00 – N/A

PART 10 – Rhode Island Fire Alarm Code

10.1 RHODE ISLAND FIRE ALARM CODE

A. ADOPTION OF NFPA 72 AS THE RHODE ISLAND FIRE ALARM CODE.

1. The National Fire Alarm & Signaling Code, NFPA 72 2010 Edition), as amended by § 10.1(A)(2) of this Part below, is hereby adopted as the “Rhode Island Fire Alarm Code”. Notwithstanding any provision in the Rhode Island Fire Safety Code to the contrary, any building or structure that is in compliance with the 2003 editions of NFPA 1 and 101, under the 2003 Fire Safety Act as amended, shall not be required to comply with the 2010 edition of NFPA 72 until December 31, 2015 where such compliance would require additional expenditures. However, the above compliance exceptions shall not apply to any expenditures for the continued testing and maintenance of fire detection, protection and suppression systems approved under the 2003 Fire Safety Act that were also required to be tested and maintained by the 2003 Fire Safety Act.
2. The specific rules addressing which use and occupancy groups require fire alarm systems, any additional requirements for the installation of these systems, and designating the party or parties responsible for the approval of these systems, are outlined in The Rhode Island Life Safety Code Section 8 (the Rhode Island Life Safety Code) Chapter 9 (Building Service and Fire Protection Equipment) occupancy Chapters 12 through 42. Any conflict between the provisions of Section 8 (The Rhode Island Life Safety Code) and the 2010 edition of NFPA 72, as adopted by this Part, shall be resolved in favor of the most stringent requirement as determined by the State Fire Marshal subject to appeal to the Fire Safety Code Board of Review.

B. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN FIRE ALARM INSTALLATION DEADLINES.

(Reserved)

C. ALARM UPGRADE EXEMPTION FOR ORIGINAL TIMELY COMPLIANCE.

1. Any building that is not a place of assembly, that installed the required fire alarm system pursuant to the Rhode Island Fire Code, as amended by the Comprehensive Fire Safety Act of 2003, and secured the approval of said system, by the authority having jurisdiction, shall be exempt from having to upgrade that fire alarm system until December 31, 2015.
2. Any place of assembly that installed the required fire alarm system pursuant to the Rhode Island Fire Code, as amended by the Comprehensive Fire Safety Act of 2003, and secured the approval of said system, by the authority having jurisdiction, shall be exempt from having to upgrade that fire alarm system until December 31, 2015.

D. EXEMPTION OF SMALLER BUSINESS GROUP BUILDINGS.

(Reserved)

E. SEPARATION OF CERTAIN OCCUPANCIES FOR FIRE ALARM REVIEW

1. Where existing low to ordinary hazard business and/or mercantile occupancies can be separated from the remainder of a building by construction maintaining an “approved acceptable separation” as outlined herein, the fire alarm square footage calculation, for this existing separated occupancy, shall be limited to the space within the “approved acceptable separation”.
 - a. In addition to the “approved acceptable separations” listed below, any properly installed Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratories listed two (2) hour fire rated assembly shall be deemed to provide proper separation of these occupancies.
 - b. For the purposes of determining whether a fire alarm system is required within a separated low to ordinary hazard business or mercantile space, a wall assembly, consisting of double five eighth (5/8) inch type-x sheetrock over an existing wall and fastened to the structure, shall be deemed to be an “approved acceptable separation.”
 - c. For the purposes of determining whether a fire alarm system is required within a separated low to ordinary hazard business or mercantile space, a ceiling and/or floor assembly, consisting of a layer of five eighth (5/8) inch type-x sheetrock attached to the existing floor joists and separated from a second required layer of five eighth (5/8) inch type-x sheetrock, by three quarter (3/4) inch, or deeper, metal furring strip or stud, shall be deemed to be an “approved acceptable separation”.
 - d. The Board recognizes that full continuity of construction, and/or full support for the rated assemblies, may never be achieved in retrofitting an existing business and/or mercantile occupancy

with an “approximate” two hour fire rated assembly. However, the authority having enforcement jurisdiction may request reasonable additional construction safeguards, such as the filling of any visible voids between wall and floor/ceiling assemblies with non-combustible materials and/or reasonable alternative structural support if necessary.

- e. A building owner may request review of such “additional construction safeguards” to the Fire Safety Code Board of Appeal & Review pursuant to the procedures outlined in § 1.7 of this Subchapter.