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Commissioner

Town of Brookhaven

Department of Public Safety

Division of Fire Prevention



Christopher J. Mehrman
Chief Fire Marshal

Fire Prevention Advisory

Fire Alarm Inspection and Testing Frequency Clarification

The following information is to provide clarification of the requirements for the frequency of inspection and testing of fire alarm systems within the Town of Brookhaven.

Current Code:

30-159 Installation and maintenance.

- A. Every fire alarm system shall be thoroughly inspected and tested not less than once every 12 months. Inspection shall be only by a fire alarm technician. A report of testing shall be made on a form specified by the Chief Fire Marshal and shall be submitted to the Division of Fire Prevention. (Amended 8-28-2012 by L.L. No. 23-2012, effective 9-11-2012.)

Facts:

It is important to understand that **inspection** and **testing** are two different portions of the process for ensuring a fire alarm system is functioning properly.

Inspections are normally conducted by a fire alarm technician who visually inspects certain components of the system for damage or abnormalities, fuses, indicating lights, etc. Testing is where a portion or component of a system, such as smoke detectors or heat detectors are intentionally activated to ensure proper operation of the device. Many times fire alarm technicians will conduct inspections and testing simultaneously.

The previous code had required that all fire alarm systems be **fully inspected and tested every 6 months**. This exceeded the recommended testing frequencies of the National Fire Protection Association. While this change may seem less restrictive, it brings the testing in line with national standards, and by virtue of the required inspection frequencies, insures that portions of the systems are inspected as often as quarterly, semi-annually, and annually. The submission of the report of inspection and testing will now only be required annually.

The New York State Fire Code adopts the National Fire Protection Association's National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code as a reference standard (Code). This code dictates the frequency of inspection and the frequency of testing based on the type of systems installed and associated components.

All fire alarm systems shall be inspected and tested in compliance with the NFPA's - National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code, specifically tables 14.3.1 & 14.4.5.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Question: How often do I need to have my fire alarm system inspected and tested?

Answer: The building owner should consult with their NYS licensed fire alarm technician / contractor, who will assist them in determining the frequency and type of inspections and testing required based on type of system installed, associated components and devices, as specified by NFPA's National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code, tables 14.3.1 & 14.4.5.

Question: Will I be able to decrease the number of inspections and testing from once every six months; to not less than every 12 months (once a year)?

Answer: It is possible for the number of inspection and testing to be decreased to once every 12 months, but again that will be determined by your NYS licensed fire alarm technician based on a review of the NFPA's National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code, tables 14.3.1 & 14.4.5 and your system.

Should you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact the Town of Brookhaven, Division of Fire Prevention at (631) 451-6262.