



Commercial Buildings Frequently Asked Questions

IBC 907.4.1, NFPA 72 10.4.4 - Does the requirement that fire alarm control units be protected mean that I must protect all annunciator panels if they include a reset function?

Answer: No. Although NFPA 72 requires the protection of a fire alarm control unit, we will not apply that requirement to an annunciator panel, even when the system can be reset from that panel. It has been determined that the best way to differentiate is to use the UL listing for the unit.

If the component is UL listed as a fire alarm control unit, then a smoke detector is required above it. If the component is UL listed as an annunciator panel (even if the system can be reset from it), then a smoke detector will not be required above it. It also helps to understand that a UL-listed annunciator panel (even if it includes a reset function) is a component that can be removed from the system and the system will still maintain its integrity. If the wires to the annunciator panel become disabled, a trouble signal is sent to the main fire alarm control unit that is protected.

IBC 907.5.2.3.3 - Does the requirement that all dwelling units be “provided with the capability to support visible notification appliances” mean that I must install the wiring and boxes for a future installation?

Answer: No. Although pre-wiring of the dwelling for the future installation of a visible alarm notification appliance is one way of satisfying this performance language, it is not the only solution. The code official can allow other methodologies proposed by the designer. It is assumed the owner is in agreement with the alternative methodology being proposed by the designer. Such capability shall be permitted to include the potential for future interconnection of the building fire alarm system with the unit smoke alarms, replacement of audible appliances with combination audible / visible appliances, or future extension of the existing wiring from the unit smoke alarm locations to the required locations for visible appliances.