
FIRE PREVENTION AND BUILDING SAFETY COMMISSION
Department of Homeland Security

Written Interpretation of the State Building Commissioner

Interpretation #: CEB-2020-29-2014 IBC-907.5

Building or Fire Safety Law Interpreted

[675 IAC 13-2.6](#), 2014 Indiana Building Code, Section 907.5 Occupant notification systems. A fire alarm system shall annunciate at the fire alarm control unit and shall initiate occupant notification upon activation, in accordance with Sections 907.5.1 through Sections 907.5.2.3.4. Where a fire alarm system is required by another section of this code, it shall be activated by:

1. Automatic fire detectors.
2. *Automatic sprinkler system* waterflow devices.
3. Manual fire alarm boxes.
4. Automatic fire-extinguishing systems.

Exception: Where notification systems are allowed elsewhere in Section 907 to annunciate at a *constantly attended location*.

Issue

Whether Section 907.5 of the 2014 Indiana Building Code (IBC) requires occupant notification in an S-1 occupancy upon activation of an automatic sprinkler system waterflow device.

Interpretation of the State Building Commissioner

Section 907.5 of the 2014 IBC does not require a sprinkler system waterflow device to activate a fire alarm, nor to provide occupant notification, regardless of occupancy group, unless the presence of the fire alarm system is required by another code section.

Rationale

Section 907.5 of the 2014 IBC states two requirements: first, that when activated, a fire alarm system has specific annunciation and notification requirements; and second, that when a fire alarm is required by another section of the code, that alarm shall be activated by, among other means, automatic sprinkler system waterflow devices. It is the second of those requirements that is at the center of this interpretation request. The code states that in order for there to be a required activation of a fire alarm system by a sprinkler waterflow device (or any of the three other listed devices), one condition must be met – the fire alarm system must be required by another (meaning a different) section of the code. In other words, there must exist a code requirement for the fire alarm system *outside* of 907.5 before 907.5's activation means are addressed.

The requirement for a fire alarm system is contained in Section 907.2 and its subsections, and they do not list a general fire alarm requirement for S-1 occupancies. Neither do they state that the mere presence of a sprinkler system is sufficient to require a fire alarm, fire alarm activation, or fire alarm notification of occupants. It should be noted, however, that Section 907.2 lists other individual design and use circumstances which could require fire alarm systems regardless of occupancy group, and those should all be examined case-by-case.

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