



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO  
San Antonio Fire Department – Fire Prevention Division  
MEMORANDUM



**TO:** San Antonio Fire Department and Planning and Development Services  
Department Associates

**FROM:** Earl Crayton, II – Assistant Chief – SAFD, Fire Marshal

**DATE:** June 9, 2006  
*Revised July 9, 2009*

**FILE:** Code Interpretation Manual

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**INTERPRETATION NUMBER:** CI2006-022

**TITLE:** Determining When Fire Alarm System Permits Are Required

**CODE EDITION:** 2006 International Fire Code (IFC) as adopted and amended by the  
City of San Antonio

**SECTION:** 105.7.4

**PURPOSE:** To provide clarification to the requirements of Section 105.7.3, and to  
provide a clear distinction between those items which constitute repair  
and maintenance functions, and those items, which constitute  
installation and modification functions resulting in the need to apply for  
a construction permit.

**QUESTION :** The 2006 Edition of the International Fire Code Section 105.7.4 states  
that “A construction permit is required for installation of or  
modification to fire alarm and detection systems and related equipment.  
Maintenance performed in accordance with this code is not considered  
a modification and does not require a permit.” When applying this  
section which typical fire alarm functions are classified as installation  
and which are classified as maintenance?

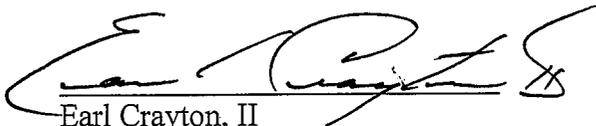
**ANSWER:** Installation functions, which require a permit are as follows:

1. Installation of an entirely new fire alarm system.
2. Remodel of an existing fire alarm system that involves the  
installation of new initiating devices or notification appliances.
3. Installation of an elevator recall control and supervisory system and  
or the remodel of an existing elevator recall control and supervisory  
system.

4. Installation of a sprinkler supervisory system and or the remodel of an existing sprinkler supervisory system.
5. Modification of an existing fire alarm system to include, the addition of new system devices, which are not initiating devices or notification appliances. These modifications include the addition of a digital alarm communicator transmitter to upgrade a local system to a remote supervising station system, the addition of accessory modules and or software to the fire alarm system to enhance system functions. (Examples: Addition of a Fire Rated Cellular Backup Panel as a secondary means of communication, modification of the existing fire alarm system program software that will alter the sequence of operations of the system)
6. Replacement of an existing fire alarm control panel with an entirely new or upgraded fire alarm control panel. (Note that the replacement of the existing fire alarm control panel and any devices to resolve compatibility issues will be considered a remodel of an existing fire alarm system.
7. Replacement of a motherboard or central processor unit that has been damaged or has been rendered non functional.

Maintenance and repair functions which, do not require a permit are as follows:

1. Replacement of any accessory modules or boards that have been damaged or have been rendered non functional.
2. Replacement of any remote power supplies that have been damaged or have been rendered non functional.
3. Replacement of any initiating devices or notification appliances that have been damaged or have been rendered non functional.
4. Replacement of fire alarm system firmware not involving a modification of the fire alarm system program software that will alter the sequence of operations of the system.
5. Repair and or replacement of fire alarm system wiring that will render all or part of the fire alarm system inoperable.



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