

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT Fire Alarm Permits in Ohio



“ A fire alarm permit must be pulled for a fire alarm system to be installed in a building in Ohio. ”

Fires are a real concern for any business owner, and while it may be easy enough to rebuild a business after a fire, it is not as easy to rebuild your losses and trauma caused by fire damage. This is where a fire alarm comes in handy, as they warn you of imminent danger and simultaneously contacts the local fire department. However, before you purchase a fire alarm, you may need to submit and be approved for a fire alarm permit by the state of Ohio.



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As with many states in the Union, the State of Ohio adopts and modifies the International Building Code (IBC) and publishes it as the Ohio Building Code (OBC). When it comes to construction in the State of Ohio, the OBC becomes the law of the land for building construction. **With respect to fire alarms, the OBC is very clear that a fire alarm permit must be pulled for a fire alarm system to be installed in a building in Ohio. This includes whether the system is “Required” or “Non-required”.**

The OBC goes into detail and describes where a fire alarm system is required and what type of system is required based upon the Use Group, Occupant Load, Construction Type, Hazards, and type of facility.

Examples of different types of systems include Manual Fire Alarm Systems and Automatic Smoke Detection Systems. Manual Fire Alarm Systems have many requirements but the basics include requiring manual pull stations at all marked exits of the building, and having notification devices throughout the facility to alert the occupants. Automatic Smoke Detection Systems include all of the requirements of a Manual Fire Alarm System but also include automatic smoke detection as per spacing requirements. Both types of systems must include duct detectors where necessary and monitoring of any type of suppression system such as a sprinkler system or kitchen hood suppression system. The OBC also references various different building codes and standards which must also be adhered to and incorporated into the system and permit process. These various different standards include but are not limited to NFPA72, which is an installation standard created by the National Fire Protection Agency for fire alarm systems. This code describes minimum requirements, spacing, locations, power requirements, etc.



If a system is not required by the OBC, an owner can still elect to install a “Non-required” system, but a permit must still be submitted and approved. There are still minimum requirements for a “Non-required” system but the system may not be held under the same scrutiny as a “Required” system. This gives the owner the option to install a fire alarm system to protect high-risk areas without having to provide coverage throughout as a “Required” system would mandate. One example of this is to install smoke detectors in potential high-risk areas without having to put smoke detectors throughout the building.



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To pull a fire alarm permit you must have a registered design professional prepare and submit drawings, cut sheets, and design criteria detailing the system. These design criteria must include but are not limited to:

- ❑ A floor plan indicating the use of all rooms
- ❑ Locations of alarm initiating devices
- ❑ Locations of alarm notification appliances, including candela ratings for visible alarm notification devices
- ❑ Location of fire alarm control unit, transponders and power supplies
- ❑ Annunciator(s)
- ❑ Power connection
- ❑ Battery calculations
- ❑ Conductor type and sizes
- ❑ Voltage drop calculations
- ❑ Manufacturer's data sheets for equipment and devices
- ❑ Details of ceiling heights and construction
- ❑ Interface of any fire safety control functions
- ❑ Classification of supervising station



The design professional must be registered and approved by the State of Ohio as a professional in the industry, which then gives that person the credentials to be able to prepare, sign, and seal the design for submittal and approval.

Contact SecurCom to talk to a certified design professional today!

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