



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONS

Public Safety Services



KATHLEEN BABINEAUX BLANCO
GOVERNOR

STATE FIRE MARSHAL

INTERPRETIVE MEMORANDUM 2006 - 01

To: Licensed Architects
Licensed Engineers
Licensed Sprinkler Contractors
Licensed Fire Alarm Contractors
Licensed Fire Suppression Contractors
Felicia Cooper, Deputy State Fire Marshal Administrator
Stephen Gogreve, Manager of Inspections
Pat Aronstein, Manager of Inspections
Plan Review Staff

From: Henry H. Fry, Deputy Assistant Secretary

Date: February 16, 2006

Re: **Building Modifications: Request for Exemption from Formal Plan Review**

In accordance with LA R.S. 40:1574, all proposed building construction types, except for one and two-family dwellings, are required to be submitted to this office prior to construction. Proposed renovations sometimes include small changes to a building, such as minor partition work, door relocations/installations, ceiling renovations, etc.

Traditionally, this office has allowed small scopes of work regarding several life safety/fire protection systems to be submitted via an "exemption form". These exemption forms have been used by the fire alarm, sprinkler, special suppression, special locking, and temporary building industries for years. Exemption forms have allowed small scopes of work to be processed quickly and efficiently - typically 1 to 2 days from receipt. These exemption forms relieve the building owner from full plan review and full plan review fee, due to the limited scope of work involved. Thus, the exemption forms have been successfully used, saving the building industry time and money.

Attached, please find a copy of a new exemption form titled: "Building Modifications: Request for Exemption from Formal Plan Review". This form is similar in purpose and scope to the other exemption forms. The "Building Modifications" exemption form has been created to address small scopes of renovation work that pertain specifically to the building, as described above.

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Smoke Detectors Save Lives!!

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Building Modifications: Request for Exemption from Formal Plan Review

It is a policy of this office to verify plan review for proposed building changes as a prerequisite to plan review of any associated life safety/fire protection systems (i.e., fire alarm, sprinkler, special locking, etc.). Typically, a copy of this office's Life Safety Code review letter accompanies a submittal for an associated fire alarm, sprinkler system, etc., review.

The intent for the Life Safety Code review prerequisite is to prevent fire alarm and sprinkler work from occurring within building construction work that has not been reviewed by this office which may contain code deficiencies requiring demolition of new work. A major goal of this office is to provide plan review prior to construction, in order to identify potential deficiencies and correct them in design, prior to unnecessary demolition, correction and reconstruction. Regardless of a full formal plan review or a minor work exemption review, this office verifies that the building renovation work is reviewed prior to work on associated life safety/fire protection systems.

On occasion, the scope of work for a fire protection system is "all inclusive" – it does not involve modifications/renovations to the building. For example, during a routine annual fire alarm or sprinkler systems inspection, existing deficiencies, such as missing/damaged smoke detectors, strobe units, sprinkler heads, etc., may be discovered.

Small modifications to fire alarm or sprinkler systems can be submitted via exemption form. Because the work does not involve architectural changes to the building, the applicant typically provides a copy of the inspection report citing the existing deficiency. The inspection report indicates the reason for the deficiency and prompts the reviewer that there is no associated building modification scope of work. Thus, the fire alarm or sprinkler exemption form is processed without delay.

The attached "Building Modifications" exemption form includes associated instructions and requirements. Direction is provided regarding what to include with the completed form and how to submit the form. Submission of this form shall be required beginning May 1, 2006. For questions regarding this policy, please contact the appropriate district inspection office closest to your location, or contact the Baton Rouge Plan Review Office at 800-256-5452 or 225-925-4920.

JCC/jcc