



Texas Department of Insurance

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RECENT CHANGES IN THE FIRE ALARM SECTIONS OF THE TEXAS INSURANCE CODE Art 5.43-2

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Parts of HB 2118, passed by the 80th Legislature, took effect September 1, 2007. The following is a brief synopsis of the bill. You should read and follow the bill in its entirety. The bill can be found on the web site at: <http://www.legis.state.tx.us/tlodocs/80R/billtext/html/HB02118F.htm>

A major change in the code establishes a new type of license, a Residential Fire Alarm Technician License (RAL), to install, service, inspect, and certify residential single-family or two-family fire alarm or detection systems. Note, this does not include the design or planning for these systems. This license is scheduled to be available in March of 2008 after adoption of all necessary rules. Existing fire alarm licenses will not be changed or deleted. Individuals currently licensed to install, service, inspect, and certify residential single-family or two-family fire alarm or detection systems will not be required to get this new RAL license but may continue to perform the specified work to the extent permitted under their current license. A feature of the new RAL is that the fee is less than existing license fees but will require the applicant to attend an 8 hour training course approved by the State Fire Marshal's Office. (*Sec. 2(17); Sec. 5(c-1); Sec. 5D(a-2) & (d)*)

Other changes to the Texas Insurance Code, Art 5.43-2, initiated by HB2118 concern:

- maintaining on each site, where fire alarm systems or devices are installed, at least one licensee to supervise the installation, except where currently exempted in Sec 3. (*Sec. 3.(b)(8)*)
- correcting references to the recodified security and NFPA codes. (*Sec. 3.(b)(3)(B) & (7)(B) & (10)(B) & (11); Sec. 5B.(e) & (f); Sec. 9.(e)*)
- prohibiting a city from requiring a fire alarm firm, to maintain a physical business location within the city. (*Sec. 3.(d)*)
- the right of a municipality or county to adopt an ordinance to require monitoring firms to call the monitored property before notifying the fire authority in the jurisdiction. (*Sec. 3.(e)*)
- the SFMO from disclosing certain personal information about a fire alarm applicant, licensee or registered firm. (*Sec. 5G.*)
- restricting the adoption of a rule, that requires a current licensee to obtain additional certification that imposes a financial responsibility. (*Sec. 6A.(c)*)
- prohibiting a political subdivision from offering fire alarm sales, service, installation or monitoring unless currently provided before September 1, 1999. (*Sec. 7.(b)*)
- providing information to aid in the reduction of false alarms, by the fire alarm firm, for every fire detection or alarm device sold. (*Sec.9.(d)(4)*)

A complete copy of the Texas Insurance Code, for fire detection and alarm devices including the changes noted above by the 80th Legislature, can be found on the SFMO web site at: <http://www.tdi.state.tx.us/fire/fmlialarm.html> and clicking on "Statute and Rules".