



Department of Development Services

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Division:	Building Division – Plans Exam	Policy & Procedure	BP-PP-084
Subject:	STROBE INSTALLATION REQUIREMENTS DURING ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING SPACES	Effective Date:	08/27/2008
Code:	IBC 907.9.1 & CCFC 1006.3.3.8.1	Revised Date:	

A. CODE REQUIREMENT

Section 907.9.1 of the 2006 IBC and Section 1006.3.3.8.1 of the CCFC specify when visible alarms are required in fire alarm systems. Exception 1 to both code sections specifies that visible alarms “are not required in alterations, except where an existing fire alarm system is upgraded or replaced, or a new fire alarm system is installed.”

B. INTERPRETATION

The IBC commentary indicates the exception is intended to prevent the need to totally replace an existing system (panels, power supplies, and wiring for visible alarms) due to a small alteration, and also to prevent having visible alarms in a small altered area when other areas of the building are not provided with visible alarms. As such, **the exception clarifies that visible alarms are not required for alterations to existing buildings when visible alarms are not already installed within the building.**

Exception 1 could be read to indicate that visible alarms are not required in areas where alterations occur, regardless of the level of protection provided in the space or in the building. Literally interpreted, this exception could allow for an alteration to occur in a space that already has visible alarms prior to the alteration, and by Exception 1, have the visible alarms removed.

- When other areas within a building are already equipped with visible alarms, the altered space is required to have visible alarms installed. The exception does not overrule this.
- When panels, power supplies, and wiring for visible alarms are already installed within a building, this exception does not allow removal of visible alarms in the altered area.
- When a visible alarm system exists within a building, either fully or partly covering building areas, visible alarms are required in altered spaces and shall be coordinated with the existing visible alarm system.

C. EXAMPLE

In an existing covered mall building, where the mall already contains visible alarms and tenant spaces may not have existing visible alarms, visible alarms are required to be installed in tenant spaces being altered. Those tenant space visible alarms are to be coordinated with the existing mall visible alarm system.

Revision History:

POLICY #	TITLE	Effective Date	Revised	Reviewed
BP-PP-084	Strobe Installation Requirements During Alterations To Existing Spaces	August 27, 2008		

Approved by: Ronald L. Lynn <i>Director</i>	Concurred by: Gregory J. Franklin <i>Assistant Director</i>	Concurred by: Girard Page <i>Deputy Fire Chief</i>
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