

Fire Alarms

A. Maintenance, Inspection and Testing Requirements

Fire alarm devices need to be inspected, tested and certified *annually*. However, a large property may be divided into quarters, allowing a different portion of the complex to be serviced every three months, so that at the end of a year, the entire property has been inspected, tested and certified. This must be performed by a licensed technician. Upon completion, the panel must have an approved certification tag affixed to it. (See sample). In addition, there must be a *monthly* visual inspection of the panel and batteries, which can be performed by on-site staff. (NFPA 25-7.3.1).

B. Common Problems & Solutions

1. *Problem:* Residents of a unit remove the sounding device in each unit, sending a trouble signal to the alarm panel.

Solution: Educating residents that that device is there for their protection and safety, and will sound only in the event of an emergency or testing.

2. ***Problem:*** Pull stations tampered with and pulled in non-emergency situations.

Solution: Purchase tamper covers which will sound before the actual alarm sounds, notifying maintenance personnel that a pull station has been tampered with.

3. ***Problem:*** Property managers and maintenance technicians are not properly trained and do not have a working knowledge of the alarm functions.

Solution: Request the fire protection company to provide a training seminar for all staff *semi-annually*, to include silencing of alarms when accidentally tripped, resetting of fire alarm panel, resetting of the pull stations, and post emergency contact information.