

## CHAPTER 2023-224

### Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 327

An act relating to fire sprinkler system projects; amending s. 553.7932, F.S.; revising and providing definitions; providing requirements for a simplified permitting process for certain fire sprinkler system projects; amending s. 633.102, F.S.; revising the definition of the term “contractor” as it relates to fire sprinkler systems; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 553.7932, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

553.7932 Simplified permitting ~~processes~~ process for fire alarm system projects.—

(1) As used in this section, the term:

(a) “Component” means valves, fire sprinklers, escutcheons, hangers, compressors, or any other item deemed acceptable by the local enforcing agency. For purposes of this paragraph, a valve does not include pressure-regulating, pressure-reducing, or pressure-control valves.

(b)(a) “Contractor” means a person who:

1. Is qualified to engage in the business of electrical or alarm system contracting pursuant to a certificate or registration issued by the department under part II of chapter 489; or

2. Is qualified to engage in the business of fire protection system contracting pursuant to a license or certificate issued by the State Fire Marshal.

(c)(b) “Fire alarm system project” means a fire alarm system alteration of a total of 20 or fewer initiating devices and notification devices, or the installation or replacement of a fire communicator connected to an existing fire alarm control panel in an existing commercial, residential, apartment, cooperative, or condominium building.

(d) “Fire sprinkler system project” means a fire protection system alteration of a total of 20 or fewer fire sprinklers in which the sprinklers are of the same K-factor and located in spaces where there is no change of hazard classification or increased system coverage area, or the installation or replacement of an equivalent fire sprinkler system component in an existing commercial, residential, apartment, cooperative, or condominium building. For purposes of this paragraph, a component is equivalent if the component has the same or better characteristics, including electrical,

hydraulic, pressure losses, and required listings and spacing as the component being replaced.

(2)(a) A local enforcement agency may require a contractor, as a condition of obtaining a permit for a fire alarm system project or fire sprinkler system project, to submit a completed application and payment.

(b) A local enforcement agency may not require a contractor to submit plans or specifications as a condition of obtaining a permit for a fire alarm system project or fire sprinkler system project.

(3) A local enforcement agency must issue a permit for a fire alarm system project or fire sprinkler system project in person or electronically.

(4) A local enforcement agency must require at least one inspection of a fire alarm system project or fire sprinkler system project to ensure compliance with applicable codes and standards. If a fire alarm system project or fire sprinkler system project fails an inspection, the contractor must take corrective action as necessary to pass inspection.

(5)(a) For a fire alarm system project, a contractor must keep a copy of the plans and specifications at the a fire alarm system project worksite and make such plans and specifications available to the inspector at each inspection.

(b) For a fire sprinkler system project to alter an existing fire protection system, a contractor must keep a copy of the plans and specifications at the fire sprinkler system project worksite and make such plans and specifications available to the inspector at each inspection.

(c) For a fire sprinkler system project to install or replace a component, a contractor must keep a copy of the manufacturer's installation instructions and any pertinent testing instructions needed to certify or accept the component at the fire sprinkler system project worksite and make such documents available to the inspector at each inspection.

Section 2. Subsection (3) of section 633.102, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

633.102 Definitions.—As used in this chapter, the term:

(3)(a) “Contractor I” means a contractor whose business includes the execution of contracts requiring the ability to lay out, fabricate, install, inspect, alter, repair, and service all types of fire protection systems, excluding preengineered systems.

(b) “Contractor II” means a contractor whose business is limited to the execution of contracts requiring the ability to lay out, fabricate, install, inspect, alter, repair, and service water sprinkler systems, water spray systems, foam-water sprinkler systems, foam-water spray systems, standpipes, combination standpipes and sprinkler risers, all piping that is an

integral part of the system beginning at the point of service as defined in this section, sprinkler tank heaters, air lines, thermal systems used in connection with sprinklers, and tanks and pumps connected thereto, excluding preengineered systems.

(c) “Contractor III” means a contractor whose business is limited to the execution of contracts requiring the ability to fabricate, install, inspect, alter, repair, and service carbon dioxide systems, foam extinguishing systems, dry chemical systems, and Halon and other chemical systems, excluding preengineered systems.

(d) “Contractor IV” means a contractor whose business is limited to the execution of contracts requiring the ability to lay out, fabricate, install, inspect, alter, repair, and service automatic fire sprinkler systems for detached one-family dwellings, detached two-family dwellings, and mobile homes, excluding preengineered systems and excluding single-family homes in cluster units, such as apartments, condominiums, and assisted living facilities or any building that is connected to other dwellings. A Contractor IV is limited to the scope of practice specified in NFPA 13D.

(e) “Contractor V” means a contractor whose business is limited to the execution of contracts requiring the ability to fabricate, install, alter, repair, and service the underground piping for a fire protection system using water as the extinguishing agent beginning at the point of service as defined in this act and ending no more than 1 foot above the finished floor. A Contractor V may inspect underground piping for a water-based fire protection system under the direction of a Contractor I or Contractor II.

This subsection may not be construed to include engineers or architects within the defined terms and does not limit or prohibit a licensed fire protection engineer or architect with fire protection design experience from designing any type of fire protection system. A distinction is made between system design concepts prepared by the design professional and system layout as defined in this section and typically prepared by the contractor. However, a person certified under this chapter as a Contractor I or Contractor II may design new fire protection systems of 49 or fewer sprinklers; may design the alteration of an existing fire sprinkler system if the alteration consists of the relocation, addition, or deletion of 49 or fewer sprinklers, notwithstanding the size of the existing fire sprinkler system; and ~~or~~ may design the alteration of an existing fire sprinkler system if the alteration consists of the relocation or deletion of 249 or fewer sprinklers and the addition of up to 49 sprinklers, as long as the cumulative total number of fire sprinklers being added, relocated, or deleted does not exceed 249, notwithstanding the size of the existing fire sprinkler system, if there is no change of occupancy of the affected areas, as defined in the Florida Building Code and the Florida Fire Prevention Code, and there is no change in the water demand as defined in NFPA 13, “Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems,” and if the occupancy hazard classification as defined in NFPA 13 is reduced or remains the same as a result of the alteration. Conflicts between the Florida Building Code and the Florida Fire Prevention

Code shall be resolved pursuant to s. 553.73(1)(d). A person certified as a Contractor I, Contractor II, or Contractor IV may design a new fire protection system or design the alteration of an existing fire protection system, the scope of which complies with NFPA 13D, “Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems in One- and Two-Family Dwellings and Manufactured Homes,” as adopted by the State Fire Marshal, notwithstanding the number of fire sprinklers. Contractor-developed plans may not be required by any local permitting authority to be sealed by a registered professional engineer.

Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2023.

Approved by the Governor June 12, 2023.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 12, 2023.