

By Senator Rodrigues

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to public safety emergency
3 communications systems; amending s. 633.202, F.S.;
4 requiring the State Fire Marshal to adopt design
5 criteria for minimum radio coverage for public safety
6 emergency communications systems and standards for
7 minimum interior radio coverage and signal strength
8 within certain buildings; requiring that a local
9 jurisdiction's public safety emergency communications
10 system be certified as meeting or exceeding certain
11 criteria before new and existing buildings are
12 required to install, or to be assessed for, two-way
13 radio communications enhancement systems; authorizing
14 a local authority that has jurisdiction to require
15 certain coverage assessments or system installations;
16 requiring local jurisdictions to produce radio
17 coverage heatmaps under certain circumstances;
18 prohibiting local jurisdictions from withholding
19 certificates of occupancy under certain circumstances;
20 revising provisions related to the implementation
21 schedule; providing exceptions; defining the term
22 "apartment occupancy"; providing rulemaking authority;
23 providing applicability; providing an effective date.

24
25 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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27 Section 1. Subsection (18) of section 633.202, Florida
28 Statutes, is amended to read:

29 633.202 Florida Fire Prevention Code.—

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30 (18) (a) The State Fire Marshal authority having
31 jurisdiction shall adopt within sections of the Florida Fire
32 Prevention Code provisions that establish ~~determine~~ the
33 following criteria and standards:

34 1. Design criteria for minimum radio coverage for public
35 safety emergency signal strength for fire department
36 communications systems.

37 2. Standards for minimum interior radio coverage and signal
38 strength within in all new high-rise and existing high-rise
39 buildings.

40 (b) Before a local authority having jurisdiction may
41 require installation of a two-way radio communications
42 enhancement system in a new or existing building, or require
43 assessment of the need for a two-way radio communications
44 enhancement system in a new or existing building, a qualified
45 third party must certify that the jurisdiction's public safety
46 emergency communications system meets or exceeds the design
47 criteria for minimum radio coverage provided in the current
48 published edition of the National Fire Protection Association's
49 Standard for the Installation, Maintenance, and Use of Emergency
50 Services Communications Systems, NFPA 1221. Such certification
51 remains valid until the next triennial adoption of the Florida
52 Fire Prevention Code which incorporates changes to NFPA 1221.

53 (c) Within a jurisdiction whose public safety emergency
54 communications system has a valid radio coverage design
55 certification under paragraph (b), the local authority having
56 jurisdiction may:

57 1. Require assessment of a new or existing building's
58 interior radio coverage and signal strength, for purposes of

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59 determining the need for a two-way radio communications
60 enhancement system within the building, no more frequently than:

61 a. For a high-rise building, once every 3 years; or

62 b. For any other building, once every 5 years.

63 2. Require installation of a two-way radio communications
64 enhancement system in a new or existing building if the interior
65 of the building does not meet the minimum radio signal strength
66 as required in the Florida Fire Prevention Code.

67 (d)1. In jurisdictions in which new buildings are required
68 to install two-way radio communications enhancement systems, the
69 local authority having jurisdiction must produce a radio
70 coverage heatmap of the coverage area to assist design
71 professionals in determining the projected need for installation
72 of two-way radio communications enhancement systems in proposed
73 new buildings. The heatmap must model at least three radio
74 signal strength building penetration conditions for a portable
75 radio worn on the hip: light building, medium building, and
76 heavy building.

77 2. When assessment of a new building's interior radio
78 coverage and signal strength determines that installation of a
79 two-way radio communications enhancement system is required, the
80 local authority having jurisdiction may not withhold issuance of
81 a certificate of occupancy for the building if the professional
82 engineer or architect who is licensed in this state and designed
83 the building projected, in his or her professional judgment and
84 based on the available evidence of radio coverage, determines
85 that a two-way radio communications enhancement system would not
86 be necessary to meet the standards for minimum interior radio
87 coverage and signal strength. The local authority having

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88 jurisdiction may not require installation of the two-way radio
89 communications enhancement system until at least 90 days after
90 completion of the building's interior radio coverage and signal
91 strength assessment report.

92 (e)1. Standards for Existing buildings are not required to
93 comply with minimum interior radio coverage and signal strength
94 for fire department communications and requirements for two-way
95 radio communications system enhancement systems do not apply to
96 existing buildings other than apartment occupancies
97 communications as required by the Florida Fire Prevention Code
98 until January 1, 2022. However, by December 31, 2019, an
99 existing building other than an apartment occupancy which is out
100 of building that is not in compliance with such standards and
101 the requirements for minimum radio strength for fire department
102 communications must apply for the an appropriate permit for the
103 required installation with the local authority government agency
104 having jurisdiction and must demonstrate that the building will
105 comply with the standards and requirements become compliant by
106 January 1, 2022. If a permit applied for under this subparagraph
107 is issued, it remains valid until at least January 1, 2022.

108 2. Standards for minimum interior radio coverage and signal
109 strength and requirements for two-way radio communications
110 enhancement systems do not apply to existing apartment
111 occupancies buildings are not required to comply until January
112 1, 2025. However, by December 31, 2022, an existing apartment
113 occupancy that is out of compliance with such standards and
114 requirements must buildings are required to apply for the
115 appropriate permit for the required communications installation
116 with the local authority having jurisdiction and must

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117 demonstrate that the apartment occupancy will comply with the
118 standards and requirements by January 1, 2025 ~~December 31, 2022.~~
119 If a permit applied for under this subparagraph is issued, it
120 remains valid until at least January 1, 2025.

121 (f) If a jurisdiction modifies its public safety emergency
122 communications system such that modifications to existing two-
123 way radio communications enhancement system installations are
124 required, the local authority having jurisdiction must give
125 owners of the two-way radio communications enhancement systems
126 at least 180-days' notice before requiring any modifications.

127 (g) Notwithstanding paragraph (e), a local authority having
128 jurisdiction that requires an existing building, regardless of
129 whether the building is an apartment occupancy, to retrofit its
130 two-way radio communications enhancement system must give the
131 building owner at least 1 year to complete the retrofit. The 1-
132 year period begins when the local authority having jurisdiction
133 cites the building owner with a notice of code violation in
134 accordance with chapter 162.

135 (h) In lieu of requiring two-way radio communications
136 enhancement systems in new and existing buildings, a local
137 authority having jurisdiction may approve the use of mobile
138 radio repeaters in emergency service vehicles.

139 (i) As used in this section, the term "apartment occupancy"
140 has the same meaning as defined in the Florida Fire Prevention
141 Code.

142 (j) The State Fire Marshal shall incorporate this
143 subsection within sections of the Florida Fire Prevention Code
144 and may adopt rules to implement, interpret, and enforce this
145 subsection.

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146 (k) The provisions of s. 633.208 and this section which
147 authorize local adoption of more stringent requirements than
148 those specified in the Florida Fire Prevention Code and minimum
149 firesafety codes do not apply to the requirements of this
150 subsection.

151 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.