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2023 Legislature

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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

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26 489; or

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

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

36 (d) "Fire sprinkler system project" means a fire
 37 protection system alteration of a total of 20 or fewer fire
 38 sprinklers in which the sprinklers are of the same K-factor and
 39 located in spaces where there is no change of hazard
 40 classification or increased system coverage area, or the
 41 installation or replacement of an equivalent fire sprinkler
 42 system component in an existing commercial, residential,
 43 apartment, cooperative, or condominium building. For purposes of
 44 this paragraph, a component is equivalent if the component has
 45 the same or better characteristics, including electrical,
 46 hydraulic, pressure losses, and required listings and spacing as
 47 the component being replaced.

48 (2) (a) A local enforcement agency may require a
 49 contractor, as a condition of obtaining a permit for a fire
 50 alarm system project or fire sprinkler system project, to submit

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51 a completed application and payment.

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

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

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

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

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

74 (c) For a fire sprinkler system project to install or
 75 replace a component, a contractor must keep a copy of the

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76 manufacturer's installation instructions and any pertinent
77 testing instructions needed to certify or accept the component
78 at the fire sprinkler system project worksite and make such
79 documents available to the inspector at each inspection.

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

82 633.102 Definitions.—As used in this chapter, the term:

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

88 (b) "Contractor II" means a contractor whose business is
89 limited to the execution of contracts requiring the ability to
90 lay out, fabricate, install, inspect, alter, repair, and service
91 water sprinkler systems, water spray systems, foam-water
92 sprinkler systems, foam-water spray systems, standpipes,
93 combination standpipes and sprinkler risers, all piping that is
94 an integral part of the system beginning at the point of service
95 as defined in this section, sprinkler tank heaters, air lines,
96 thermal systems used in connection with sprinklers, and tanks
97 and pumps connected thereto, excluding preengineered systems.

98 (c) "Contractor III" means a contractor whose business is
99 limited to the execution of contracts requiring the ability to
100 fabricate, install, inspect, alter, repair, and service carbon

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101 dioxide systems, foam extinguishing systems, dry chemical
102 systems, and Halon and other chemical systems, excluding
103 preengineered systems.

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

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

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124 This subsection may not be construed to include engineers or
125 architects within the defined terms and does not limit or

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126 | prohibit a licensed fire protection engineer or architect with
 127 | fire protection design experience from designing any type of
 128 | fire protection system. A distinction is made between system
 129 | design concepts prepared by the design professional and system
 130 | layout as defined in this section and typically prepared by the
 131 | contractor. However, a person certified under this chapter as a
 132 | Contractor I or Contractor II may design new fire protection
 133 | systems of 49 or fewer sprinklers; may design the alteration of
 134 | an existing fire sprinkler system if the alteration consists of
 135 | the relocation, addition, or deletion of 49 or fewer sprinklers,
 136 | notwithstanding the size of the existing fire sprinkler system;
 137 | and ~~or~~ may design the alteration of an existing fire sprinkler
 138 | system if the alteration consists of the relocation or deletion
 139 | of 249 or fewer sprinklers and the addition of up to 49
 140 | sprinklers, as long as the cumulative total number of fire
 141 | sprinklers being added, relocated, or deleted does not exceed
 142 | 249, notwithstanding the size of the existing fire sprinkler
 143 | system, if there is no change of occupancy of the affected
 144 | areas, as defined in the Florida Building Code and the Florida
 145 | Fire Prevention Code, and there is no change in the water demand
 146 | as defined in NFPA 13, "Standard for the Installation of
 147 | Sprinkler Systems," and if the occupancy hazard classification
 148 | as defined in NFPA 13 is reduced or remains the same as a result
 149 | of the alteration. Conflicts between the Florida Building Code
 150 | and the Florida Fire Prevention Code shall be resolved pursuant

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

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