MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
State Fire Marshal Division

STATEMENT of POLICY

Policy #: FP-07 (2007)	Subject of Policy: Partial and Voluntary Fire Protection Systems	
Approved By: Jerry Rosendahl	Title: State Fire Marshal	Effective Date: July 10, 2007

APPLIES TO:
All Inspection Personnel, Inspection Supervisors, Code/Plans Specialists.

PURPOSE:
To provide for uniform application of MSFC (07) provisions relating to partial and voluntary fire protection system and equipment installation.

INTERPRETATION:
The State Fire Marshal Division encourages complete, code-compliant fire protection system installation whenever possible, even when not required by code. It is understood, however, that complete, code-compliant protection is not always physically or economically feasible.

1) A "voluntary" fire protection system may be defined as an active fire protection system being provided where none is otherwise required by code when a property owner deems the extra degree of protection to be of value, or, where the voluntary system is an approved substitute for other provisions of the Code. Such installations must follow the applicable standards in-so-far-as possible with the approval of the Authority Having Jurisdiction. The limitations of voluntary systems must be clearly considered and understood before installation and approval.

Buildings or areas provided with voluntary systems not installed in conformance with the code shall be considered unprotected. When installed, voluntary systems shall ***not*** *be used as a trade-off (alternate) for code compliance unless the voluntary system is in complete compliance with the applicable code or standard.*

1.1) A "partial" fire protection system may be defined as an active fire protection system installed to nationally recognized standards in a part of a building in order to satisfy the code requirements for that particular occupancy classification within the building shell. All other code requirements must be complied with. Partial fire protection systems must adhere to their respective installation standards for the occupancy being protected.

1.2) Installation and licensing
Partial and voluntary fire protection system work must conform to requirements for licensing and permitting [MSFC Section 901.4.2]. This would include Minn. Stat. § 299M for sprinklers and Minn. Stat. § 326.2421 for alarm systems. Homeowners, however, are permitted by Minn. Stat. § 299M to install residential sprinklers in their own home without the use of a licensed

contractor. The installation of voluntary systems must also receive local AHJ approval, where applicable, before work begins.

1.3) Partial and Voluntary sprinkler systems in buildings other than one and two family dwellings:

When partial (required) fire sprinkler systems are installed, the requirements of NFPA 13 (2002 edition) shall be used. It is the policy of the State Fire Marshal Division that voluntary sprinkler systems should be installed according to NFPA 13 (2002 edition) to the maximum extent possible. NFPA 13(2002 edition) Section 4.2.

1.4) Voluntary sprinkler systems in one and two family dwellings

It is the policy of the State Fire Marshal Division to permit the installation of systems that may provide protection beyond that required by the code. These types of systems should be installed according to NFPA 13D (2002 edition).

1.5) Voluntary systems other than sprinklers

Examples of other voluntary systems could include:

- Smoke detectors to provide limited protection for times when a building is not occupied.
- Manual pull stations provided at constantly attended locations to permit fire department notification.
- Detectors located in the HVAC system for shutdown and closing of smoke dampers.
- Special suppression systems for protection of bank vaults or similar enclosures.
- Equipment usually installed for life safety, but now provided with the goal of property protection.
- Smoke removal systems, manual or automatic

The State Fire Marshal Division may permit the installation of systems that provide protection beyond that required by the code. These types of systems should be installed according to sound engineering practices and applicable nationally recognized standards to the maximum extent possible. Any equipment installed should be fully functional and must be tested, inspected and maintained as a required system would be.