



Washington State Building Code Council

Improving the built environment by promoting health, safety and welfare

1500 Jefferson Street SE • P.O. Box 41449 • Olympia, Washington 98504
(360) 407-9280 • fax (360) 586-5366 • e-mail sbcc@ga.wa.gov • www.ga.wa.gov/sbcc

STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. 14-09

CODE: 2012 International Fire Code

SECTION: IFC 1103.7, 1103.7.1, Table 1103.1

QUESTION 1: Table 1103.1 suggests that Group E occupancies are required (“R”) to comply with IFC 1103.7.1, and must install an emergency voice alarm communication system in accordance with IFC 907.2.3. However, IFC 1103.7 contains an exception to the requirement for buildings with an existing, previously approved fire alarm system.” Reading the table and the exception language together, does the exception language in IFC 1103.7 apply to Group E occupancies? Does normal maintenance and repair of an existing previously approved fire alarm system also fall within this exception?

ANSWER 1 **Yes. Group E educational buildings or structures with an existing previously approved fire alarm system are not required to comply with IFC 1103.7.1. Normal maintenance and repair of one or more components of an existing previously approved fire alarm system falls within the exception, and does not trigger a requirement to comply with IFC 1103.7.1.**

QUESTION 2: Where an approved existing alarm system is in place, if an existing Group E building undergoes an alteration involving less than 50 percent of the square footage of such building, is there a requirement that an emergency voice communication system be installed throughout all areas of the existing building? Does the project need to comply with IFC 1103.7.1?

ANSWER 2: **No, there is no requirement. If the alteration involves less than 50 percent of the square footage of a building, it would not need to comply with IFC 1103.7.1.**

QUESTION 3: Where a property contains more than one Group E building with an existing approved fire alarm system, is the square footage calculation referred to in the preceding question undertaken for each building separately (and not for the aggregate of all square footage of all buildings on a property)?

ANSWER 3: **Yes.**

SUPERSEDES: None

REQUESTED BY: Spokane Fire Department