

Fire Safety Code

This information sheet explains the requirements for works that can be undertaken as complying development for the purposes of fire safety.

Important note

This information sheet is for guidance only and may not contain all the information relevant to every property in NSW. Applicants should refer to the [relevant planning controls](#)¹ before beginning work, or seek professional advice on how the planning controls apply to their property.

The majority of the development that can be done as exempt or complying development in NSW is identified in the State wide exempt and complying development policy (the policy). View the policy at the [Exempt and Complying Development Policy website](#)².

Complying development is a joint planning and construction approval that can be granted by council or a private certifier. [Information sheet 1.2](#)³ provides more information about complying development.

Note: As identified in Information Sheets 1.1 and 1.2 exempt and complying development cannot be carried out on certain land.

Introduction

A new part of the policy provides a streamlined approval pathway for certain fire safety measures and related works. The policy covers three work categories:

1. The installation or extension of a fire sprinkler system in a residential aged care facility
2. The alteration to a hydraulic fire safety system, and
3. Fire alarm communication links works

The Fire Safety Code consolidates the provisions for 1 and 3 above into a stand-alone part of the policy.

What are the recent changes to the approval of fire sprinkler systems in residential aged care facilities?

The provisions around installing a fire sprinkler system in a residential aged care facility have been amended as follows:

- Development standards relating to excavation and drainage have been removed and are now dealt with through conditions of approval.
- Water storage tanks – an additional development standard has been added prohibiting the tanks from being located over a registered easement.
- The provisions for fixed on-site pump sets and associated external pump houses or enclosures have been amended to require the walls and roof of any pump house or enclosure to be of a

¹ <https://maps.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/Terms>

² www.planning.nsw.gov.au/exemptandcomplying

³ www.planning.nsw.gov.au/exemptandcomplyingoverview

non-combustible material, unless otherwise required by the Building Code of Australia.

- Amendments to conditions of approval for fire sprinkler systems in residential aged care facilities under the Fire Safety Code have been made to ensure consistency with other development under the policy. The amended conditions relate to hours of construction, earthworks, waste management and maintenance of the site.

Managing hydraulic fire safety systems as complying development

Some areas in NSW may, at times, experience reduced water pressure as a result of maintenance work by water utility companies. This can have a negative impact on the performance of hydraulic fire safety systems.

To help address this, the Fire Safety Code now allows alterations to hydraulic fire safety systems as complying development.

Such works may include the installation or modification of fire mains, fire water storage tanks, on-site fire pumps or fire brigade booster connections. Related works including the construction of a pump house or enclosure are also complying development under the Code.

These development standards also apply to alterations to a hydraulic fire safety system.

Streamlining the paperwork

The *Environmental Planning & Assessment Regulation 2000* (the Regulation) has been amended to remove the need for the issue of a fire safety schedule and a fire safety certificate, for an alteration to a hydraulic fire safety system in certain circumstances. The Regulation also outlines documentation that must accompany an application for an alteration to a hydraulic fire safety system.

General modifications to sprinkler systems (except in residential aged care facilities), fire hydrants, fire hose reels and other hydraulic fire safety systems

that are not related to water pressure management are not included within the Fire Safety Code. Such works may require development consent.

Fire alarm communication link works

The Fire Safety Code provisions relating to fire alarm communication link works remain the same, the nature of the development to which these standards apply differs.

The standards no longer apply to works involving the conversion of a fire alarm system from connection with the alarm monitoring system of Fire and Rescue NSW to the connection with the alarm monitoring system of a private service provider, as all of these conversions are now complete.

The complying development provisions for the two other types of fire alarm conversions that were referred to in Part 4A have been transferred to the Fire Safety Code and includes:

- converting a fire alarm system from connection with the alarm monitoring system of a private service provider to connection with the alarm monitoring system of another private service provider; and,
- converting a fire alarm system from connection with the alarm monitoring system of a private service provider to connection with a different alarm monitoring system of the same private service provider.

This work is permissible development under the *State Environmental Planning Policy - Miscellaneous Consent Provisions 2007*

A supplementary category of works has also been included in the Fire Safety Code relating to new connections and reconnections of fire alarm communication links.

As the conversion of fire alarm communication links from the alarm monitoring system of Fire and Rescue NSW to the alarm monitoring system of a private service provider is now complete, the concessions in the Regulation relating to the issue of fire safety schedules and certificates for fire link

conversions have been deleted. Therefore all fire alarm communication link works will need to comply with the requirements of the Regulation relating to fire safety schedules and certificates as a result of these changes.

Clause 129B of the Regulation, which requires an inspection of the site before a complying development certificate can be issued, has been amended to now include an exemption for complying development certificates for fire alarm communication link works.

Further Information

For more information visit the [Exempt and Complying Development Policy website](#)⁴ or contact the Department's Exempt and Complying Development Team on 1300 305 695 or by [email](#)⁵.

Electronic Housing Code

The Electronic Housing Code website helps applicants determine whether the proposed development qualifies as exempt or complying development and the standards that must be met.

Applications for complying development can also be lodged and tracked online for those council areas which are using the Electronic Housing Code. Visit the [Electronic Housing Code website](#)⁶ to find out if it is used by your local council or for more details.

⁴ www.planning.nsw.gov.au/exemptandcomplying

⁵ codes@planning.nsw.gov.au

⁶ www.electronichousingcode.com.au/