

**WAC 296-800-31070 Install and maintain an appropriate employee alarm system.**

**Exemptions:**

- If you have ten or fewer employees in a particular workplace, you can use direct voice communication to sound the alarm, if all employees can hear it. For this kind of workplace, you do not need a back-up system.
- In workplaces where employees would not otherwise be able to recognize audible or visible alarms, you can use tactile devices to alert them.

(1) You must make sure that a working employee alarm system with a distinctive signal to warn employees of fire or other emergencies is installed and maintained.

**Exemption:** You do not need an alarm system if employees can promptly see or smell a fire or other hazard in time to provide adequate warning to other employees.

(2) You must make sure that the following systems meet the requirements of this rule, if you use them as your employee alarm system:

- (a) Supervisory alarms.
- (b) Discharge alarms.
- (c) Detection systems required on fixed extinguishing systems.
- (d) Detection systems required on fire suppression systems.
- (3) You must make sure that your employee alarm systems are:
  - (a) Providing enough warning to allow employees to safely escape from the workplace, the immediate work area, or both.
  - (b) Noticeable above surrounding noise or light levels by all employees in the affected portions of the workplace.
  - (c) Distinctive and recognizable as a signal, to evacuate the work area.
  - (d) Restored to working order as soon as possible, after each test or alarm.
  - (e) Supervised, if installed after July 1, 1982, and if it has that capacity.
  - (f) Able to alert assigned personnel whenever a malfunction exists in the system.
  - (g) Adequately warning employees of emergencies.
  - (h) Serviced, maintained, and tested by a person trained in the alarm system's design and functions to keep the system operating reliably and safely.
  - (i) In working order, except when undergoing repairs or maintenance.
  - (j) Warning employees of fire or other emergencies with a distinctive signal, if they are not able to see or smell a fire or other hazard.
  - (k) Manual actuation devices that, if provided, are unobstructed, easy to find, and readily accessible.
  - (l) Using alarm devices, components, combinations of devices, or systems with approved construction and installation. This applies to steam whistles, air horns, strobe lights, or similar lighting devices, as well as tactile devices.
  - (m) Supplied with spare alarm devices available to restore the system promptly if a component breaks, is worn, or destroyed.
  - (n) Kept in full operating condition by maintaining and replacing power supplies as often as necessary.
  - (o) Supplied with a back-up means of alarm, such as employee runners or telephones, when regular systems are out of service.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, and 49.17.060. WSR 18-22-116, § 296-800-31070, filed 11/6/18, effective 12/7/18; WSR 08-18-056, § 296-800-31070, filed 9/2/08, effective 11/2/08. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, [49.17].040, and

[49.17].050. WSR 01-11-038, § 296-800-31070, filed 5/9/01, effective 9/1/01.]