



Emergency Responder Radio Coverage System



During emergencies, fire fighters and other emergency response personnel use portable radios to communicate while inside of the building or structure.

Buildings and structures can interfere with the emergency responder's ability to effectively communicate. Various construction types and materials can absorb or block the radio frequency energy used to carry the signals inside or outside of the building, which poses a significant safety hazard to the emergency response personnel and building occupants.

As a safety solution, the International Fire Code (IFC) sets forth requirements for certain new and existing buildings to be equipped with an emergency responder radio coverage system:

IFC 510.1 Emergency Responder Radio Coverage in New Buildings.

All new buildings shall have *approved* radio coverage for emergency responders within the building based upon the existing coverage levels of the public safety communication systems of the jurisdiction at the exterior of the building. This section shall not require improvement of the existing public safety communication systems.

Exceptions:

1. Where *approved* by the building official and the *fire code official*, a wired communication system in accordance with Section 907.2.13.2 shall be permitted to be installed or maintained instead of an *approved* radio coverage system.
2. Where it is determined by the *fire code official* that the radio coverage system is not needed.
3. In facilities where emergency responder radio coverage is required and such systems, components or equipment required could have a negative impact on the normal operations of that facility, the *fire code official* shall have the authority to accept an automatically activated emergency responder radio coverage system.

IFC1103.2 Emergency Responder Radio Coverage in Existing Buildings.

Existing buildings that do not have approved radio coverage for emergency responders within the building, based upon the existing coverage levels of the public safety communication systems of the jurisdiction at the exterior of the building, shall be equipped with such coverage according to one of the following:

1. Where an existing wired communication system cannot be repaired or is being replaced, or where not approved in accordance with Section 510.1, Exception 1.
2. Within a timeframe established by the adopting authority.



Informational Bulletin
From the Office of the Fire Marshal

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Exception: Where it is determined by the fire code official that the radio coverage system is not needed.

that the required level of radio coverage is present.

Fire Marshal Permit Required

A permit issued by the Camas-Washougal Fire Marshal' Office for the installation of or modification to emergency responder radio coverage systems and related equipment is required.

Maintenance performed in accordance with this code is not considered a modification and does not require a permit.

Design, Installation, Testing and Maintenance shall follow IFC, NFPA, FCC and CRESA requirements.

Identification

Buildings equipped with an Emergency Responder Radio Coverage system shall be identified by a sign located on or near the Fire Alarm Control Panel stating: "This building is equipped with an Emergency Responder Radio Coverage System."

As a general rule, fire protection and related equipment are identified by a red sign with minimum one inch white letters as shown below.

Example:

This building is equipped with
an Emergency Responder
Radio Coverage System

Field Testing

Police and fire personnel shall at any time have the right to enter onto the property to conduct its own field-testing to be certain