

Agrichemical Warehousing Standard Association

WAREHOUSING STANDARDS BULLETIN

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Protocol B26–Fire Detection System

Protocol B-26 is based on the 1995 Building Code Section 3.2.4 – Fire Alarm and Detection Systems

Historically, Fire Alarm Systems have proven their worth by providing early detection of fires and greatly improving reaction times. The application of this section of the building code varies based on the type or occupancy, adjoining occupancies, occupant load, and several other factors. The AWSA Protocol B27 requires the installation of a monitored fire alarm system for the agri-chemical storage area as well as the entire building in which it is housed.

This requirement is based on Section 3.2.4.2 of the Building Code, entitled **Continuity of Fire Alarm System**, and states in 3.2.4.2.3, “*If a fire alarm system is required in any portion of a building, it shall be installed throughout the building.*”

Fire alarm systems can be made up of many different types of detectors, annunciators, auto dialers, and may vary from water flow alarms in a protected facility to smoke and heat detectors of various types in non-protected facilities. For Auditors and building owners/operators to determine the application and effectiveness of a fire alarm system can be a difficult task. In instances where it is not readily apparent that an adequate system exists, auditors can accept a written statement from the alarm installation company that states one of the following:

1. “The system installed at _____ is in conformance with the National Building Code of Canada.”
2. “The system installed at _____ is in conformance with CAN/ULC-S537-M, Standard for the Verification of Fire Alarm Systems.”

Note: In certain circumstances, exception are permitted. When referring to warehouses as part of a multi-purpose building, such warehouses could be

(a) located within the building, and called “rooms,”

or

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(b) “attached structures” – to the exterior of the building.

In case a), that is a “room” within a building, the entire building requires a fire detection system to meet the National Building Code, unless the interior walls of the “room” are 4 hour fire rated and any enclosure and frame is rated at 3 hours. In this case, no additional monitoring is required other than the warehouse “room” itself.

In case b), that is an “attached structure,” the only two exceptions are as follows:

1. If the adjoining wall(s) is 4 hour fire resistance rated and any closure and frame is rated at 3 hours, then no additional monitoring is required other than the warehouse itself.
2. If the adjoining walls are 2 hour fire resistance rated with no openings in the adjoining wall(s), no additional monitoring is required other than the warehouse itself.