



## California State Fire Marshal **CODE INTERPRETATION**

Date Issued	12/28/2005	Interpretation #	05-026
Topic	School Fire Alarms		
Code Section(s)	2001 California Fire Code, Section 1006.2.4.1.2		
Requested by	John Goodbody Cavalry Systems, Inc. P.O. Box 663; Poway, CA 92074		

The 2001 California Fire Code (November 15, 2002, SUPPLEMENT) states:

**1006.2.4.1.2 [For SFM] School Fire Alarms.** *Except as provided in Section 1006.2.4.1, every building used for educational purposes, regardless of occupancy classification, shall be provided with an approved fire alarm system. This provision shall apply to, but shall not necessarily be limited to, every elementary school, high school, community college and university.*

**EXCEPTION:** *Privately owned trade or vocational schools or any firm or company which provides educational facilities and instructions for its employees.*

### **Questions:**

**1) Please confirm, or clarify, that sections beginning with [For SFM] also require enforcement by local jurisdictions, when those jurisdictions take authority over a project.**

Sections beginning with **[For SFM]** indicate amendments to the code by the State Fire Marshal. As such, they are enforceable by local jurisdictions as per Health and Safety Code Section 13146.

**2) Do the requirements apply to book stores, dining facilities, administration buildings, and parking structures when those occupancies exist within buildings also holding classrooms on a private college campus? ... when those occupancies exist in buildings with no classrooms on a private college campus, but are available to students?**

The requirements would apply throughout all buildings which house classrooms or are used for student instruction. They would not apply in buildings with no classrooms or student instruction even when these buildings are available to students.

**3) What is a "fire alarm system"? This section of code does not clarify whether a manual or automatic system are required, or whether audible and visual evacuation is required. The California Fire Code does not define "fire alarm system". NFPA 72 does define "fire alarm system", but does not specify when manual, automatic, audible or visual evacuation must be a part of such a system.**

A fire alarm system is defined in NFPA #72. Fire alarm systems installed on private college campuses may utilize either approved manual or automatic fire alarm systems. Visible notification devices shall be installed in those areas designated by the 2001 CBC Chapter 35, as per our amendments to NFPA #72, Section 4-4.5. The fire alarm systems shall be installed in accordance with the 2001 Editions of the California Fire, Building, Mechanical and Electric Codes and the 1999 Edition of NFPA 72, National Fire Alarm Code.

**4) Why does a privately owned "trade school" have an exemption that does not exist for other post-high school privately owned educational institutions? For example, does the code intend greater protection for a college-level accounting student than is required for a college-level welding student?**

The Exception to CBC Section 305.9.3 exempts privately owned trade or vocational schools as these are considered to be Group B Occupancies and do not fall within State Fire Marshal regulated occupancies.