



City of National City
Fire Department
Phone (619) 336-4550



**Fire Protection Plan Submittals and
Building Permit Issuance**

Date: March 21, 2024
Project: All Projects
Fire Marshal: R. Hernandez
Contact: (619) 336-4552

The following guideline outlines what types of fire protection plans require approval by the City of National City Fire Department Fire Prevention Division (NCFP) prior to the issuance of building permits and those that may be deferred to a later stage of construction of the project. The information below is based on “typical” projects, and the timing of submittals may be modified as indicated subject to approval of the NCFP.

- **Sprinkler Monitoring or Alarm System:** Since these systems have little impact on the design or construction of a building from a structural standpoint, NCFP requires that the plans be approved prior to concealing the structure with drywall or other materials that would impact the installation of wiring or otherwise make it more difficult to reroute wiring or relocate alarm devices and concealed boxes.
- **Underground Systems Serving Sprinklers:** Since the size and location of the incoming water pipe can affect the foundation design and building layout, and the ability to install/inspect/test the pipe is impacted significantly after foundation work has begun, we require this plan to be approved prior to issuance of building permits. There may be some cases where an exception can be granted, such as with an exterior riser that enters the building through a wall instead of the slab, where the impact is lessened and the underground plan can be deferred, or where the underground plan is in the review process and any remaining corrections are unlikely to impact the building. In either case, this is subject to approval of the NCFP.

- **New Sprinkler System, Commercial (NFPA 13 system):** Since the presence of a sprinkler system can have an impact on the structural design of a building and the sprinkler and building/structural design are interrelated in some respects, NCFP requires an approved sprinkler plan prior to issuance of building permits on new commercial buildings.
- **New Sprinkler System, Multifamily Residential (NFPA 13 and 13R systems):** Typically, NCFP requires an approved sprinkler plan prior to the issuance of building permits. However, since the sprinkler systems in many multi-family residential buildings are constructed of light-weight plastic pipe instead of steel and the hydraulic requirements for proper sprinkler operation are generally less robust compared to commercial systems, there is much less impact from the sprinkler system on the structure and more flexibility in how the sprinkler system can be routed to accommodate the building's design. Because it's usually easier to adapt a residential sprinkler system to a building, NCFP may allow the building permit to be issued ahead of approval of the sprinklers plans upon receipt of the sprinkler plans for review.
- **New Sprinkler System, Single Family Residential (13D or 13R in R-3 townhouses):** NCFD may allow these systems to be deferred unless there is a concern regarding use of shared sprinkler pipe penetrating the separation between dwelling units (typically in the attics) or being run in common walls between units; in that case, the systems would need to be designed as 13D and sprinkler plans require approval prior to building permit issuance to memorialize this.
- **Tenant Improvement to Commercial Systems (Kitchen Hoods):** These may be deferred with approval from NCFP.
- **Addition to Existing Residential System:** These can be deferred with approval from NCFP.