

CHAPTER 9  
FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS

SECTION 903.4  
2012 Edition  
IFC Interpretation 28-15  
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**903.4 Sprinkler system supervision and alarms.** All valves controlling the water supply for *automatic sprinkler systems*, pumps, tanks, water levels and temperatures, critical air pressures and water-flow switches on all sprinkler systems shall be electrically supervised by a *listed* fire alarm control unit.

**Exceptions:**

1. *Automatic sprinkler systems* protecting one- and two-family *dwellings*.
2. Limited area systems serving fewer than 20 sprinklers.
3. *Automatic sprinkler systems* installed in accordance with NFPA 13R where a common supply main used to supply both domestic water and the *automatic sprinkler system*, and a separate shutoff valve for the *automatic sprinkler system* is not provided.
4. Jockey pump control valves that are sealed or locked in the open position.
5. Control valves to commercial kitchen hoods, paint spray booths or dip tanks that are sealed or locked in the open position.
6. Valves controlling the fuel supply to fire pump engines that are sealed or locked in the open position.
7. Trim valves to pressure switches in dry, preaction and deluge sprinkler systems that are sealed or locked in the open position.

**REFERENCED SECTIONS:**

INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE

CHAPTER 1  
SCOPE AND ADMINISTRATION

SECTION 102  
APPLICABILITY

[A] **102.1 General.** Where there is a conflict between a general requirement and a specific requirement, the specific requirement shall be applicable. Where, in any specific case, different sections of this code specify different materials, methods of construction or other requirements, the most restrictive shall govern.

CHAPTER 9  
FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS

SECTION 901  
GENERAL

**901.6 Supervisory service.** Where required, *fire protection systems* shall be monitored by an approved supervising station in accordance with NFPA 72.

**901.6.1 Automatic sprinkler systems.** Automatic sprinkler systems shall be monitored by an *approved* supervising station.

**Exceptions:**

1. A supervising station is not required for *automatic sprinkler systems* protecting one- and two family dwellings.
2. Limited area systems serving fewer than 20 sprinklers.



**Q:** Is electrical monitoring by an approved supervising station required when the automatic sprinkler system is installed in accordance with NFPA 13R, a common supply main is used to supply both the domestic water and the automatic sprinkler system, and a separate shutoff valve for the automatic sprinkler system is not provided?

**A:** No.

Similar to limited area sprinkler systems which are off the domestic supply, electrical supervision is not required for NFPA 13R residential combination services when a shutoff valve is not installed. Such NFPA 13R sprinkler systems are supervised in that the only way to shut off the sprinkler system is to also shut off the domestic water supply.

Section 901.6.1 of the *International Building Code*® requiring all automatic sprinkler systems to be monitored by an approved supervising station is a “general” provision where Section 903.4 Exception #3 of the *International Fire Code*® is a “specific” provision for NFPA 13R sprinkler systems with a common supply main.

Section 102.1 of the *International Building Code*® states where there is a conflict between a general requirement and a specific requirement; the specific requirement shall be applicable.

Therefore, Section 903.4 Exception #3 essentially provides another exception to the general requirement of requiring electrical monitoring of automatic sprinkler systems by an approved supervising system.

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