

January 14, 2020

Construction Industry, Designers, Contractors and Suppliers providing services in Sooke

Advisory #4 – Verification of Fire Alarm Systems & Signals to a Municipal Fire Department

The British Columbia Building Code 2018, (BCBC) which is adopted in Sooke, by the District of Sooke Building Bylaw, contains several provisions that apply to the Installation and Verification of Fire Alarm Systems or any up-grading or alterations to any Fire Alarm System or parts thereof and Signals to a Municipal Fire Department. We are alerting you to the need for building owners, as well as their designers, engineers, builders and material suppliers on their behalf, to comply with the requirements of the 2018 BCBC regarding the Installation and Verification of Fire Alarm Systems and Signals to a Municipal Fire Department.

Please be advised that in addition to an Electrical Permit a Building Permit is also required for the installation of a Fire Alarm System or any up-grading or alterations to a Fire Alarm System or parts thereof, including the replacement of a Fire Alarm Panel.

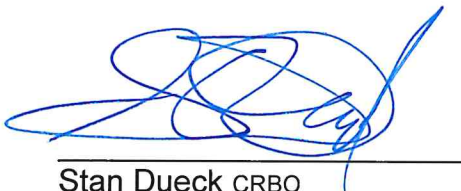
In the interest of public safety, the Building Officials of the District of Sooke require independent "Third Party Verification", as stated in CAN/ULC S537 and as clarified in ULC Bulletin # 2006-03 (included as part of this Advisory). This applies to all newly installed Fire Alarm System, the replacement of a Fire Alarm Panel or any up-graded or altered to an existing Fire Alarm System or parts thereof. As the table in the attached bulletin states in scenario one, a team consisting of a Professional Electrical Engineer Designer, a licensed electrician Installer and verification by a fire alarm company technician is acceptable to the AHJ's within District of Sooke. Scenario one does not require any of the parties to be listed with ULC, however, the "Confirmation of Fire Alarm Verification Form" included on page 7 of this Advisory together with the Fire Alarm Verification is required to be submitted. Under scenarios two and three as detailed in the bulletin, the District of Sooke requires "Third Party Verification" to be carried out only by companies listed as Fire Alarm Verification Companies with Underwriters Laboratories of Canada (ULC). When verification is provided under scenarios two or three the verification company must also provide a certificate of verification issued by ULC.

For all annual fire alarm systems and remote signaling and monitoring systems the only inspections and certifications the District of Sooke will accept are certificates issued by ULC. These certificates are only available to those companies that are listed with ULC as Fire Alarm Service Companies and are endorsed for the standards that are being tested to.

We hope that this advisory will help eliminate confusion about the Installation, Verification and Monitoring of Fire Alarm Systems and will encourage uniform application of the 2018 British Columbia Building Code requirements. Please feel free to make copies of this advisory available to your customers as you see fit. Your assistance in achieving these goals will be greatly appreciated.

The BC Building, Plumbing and Fire Codes are available to read online at:

<https://www.bcpublications.ca/BCPublications/>



Stan Dueck CRBO
Chief Building Official
Building Safety
District of Sooke
Phone: (250) 642-1634



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Compliance with the Building Bylaw are addressed in this advisory. The British Columbia Building Code 2018, (BCBC) which is adopted in Sooke, by the District of Sooke Building Bylaw.
Words in *italics* are defined in the 2018 BCBC.

This advisory is issued to ensure that individuals and firms involved in the engineering, designing, installation and maintenance in regards to a Fire Alarm Verification and the Monitoring and Signaling to a Municipal Fire Department are aware of the requirements governing the installation, Verification, Monitoring and Signaling requirements of these systems.

The requirements for the installation of Fire Alarm Systems and the required Monitoring and Signaling to a Municipal Fire Department are regulated by the 2018 BCBC. The details of the type of system; including the features, the monitoring and signaling systems, the devices and the location of these devices are regulated by the 2018 BCBC. The requirements for the testing and verification of a newly installed Fire Alarm Systems, the replacement of a Fire Alarm Panel or any up-grading or alterations to any existing Fire Alarm System or parts thereof is also governed by the 2018 BCBC.

The 2018 BCBC requires that all new installations of Fire Alarm Systems, the replacement of a Fire Alarm Panel or any up-grading or alterations to an existing Fire Alarm System or parts thereof, be installed in compliance with current edition of CAN/ULC-S524, "Installation of Fire Alarm Systems", as stated in 3.2.4.5.(1) of the 2018 BCBC. These systems are to be tested in conformance with the requirements of current edition of CAN/ULC-S537, "Verification of Fire Alarm Systems", as stated in 3.2.4.5.(2) of the 2018 BCBC. The 2018 BCBC also requires that Fire Alarm Monitoring and Signals to a Municipal Fire Department be installed in conformance with the current edition of CAN/ULC-S561, "Installation and Services for Fire Signal Receiving Centres and Systems", as stated in 3.2.4.7.(4) of the 2018 BCBC.

It is the owner's responsibility to ensure that only qualified personnel, who are trained in and are testing experts in the specialized field of Fire Alarm Systems, carry out the Verification of a Fire Alarm System in conformance with the 2018 BCBC. The actual wiring of the systems devices and connections to power sources must comply with the Canadian Electrical Code.

CAN/ULC – S537 "Verification of Fire Alarm Systems" states the following:

"The requirements of this standard contemplates that the Verification procedure described herein will be conducted by an organization other than the installing contractor and designer, and that the Verification will be carried out by qualified personnel in the employ of an organization acceptable to the authorities having jurisdiction." Please see ULC Bulletin 2006-03 which is included in this Advisory.



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The ULC program for certification of listed Fire Alarm Service Companies provides the assurance that the listed company has been examined, tested and monitored to prove its expertise and credibility as a Fire Alarm Service Company. The certification by an independent agency, ULC, is considered adequate proof of the expertise of the company as well as satisfying the requirement of an agency other than the “designer, installer, supplier or the manufacture of the Fire Alarm System or parts thereof”.

ULC listed companies must not only demonstrate knowledge of the Fire Alarm System they must also demonstrate knowledge of the 2018 BCBC requirements. It is insufficient to confirm that a newly installed Fire Alarm System, the replacement of a Fire Alarm Panel or any up-graded or alterations to an existing Fire Alarm System or parts thereof is functional; it must also be Verified that all requirements of the 2018 BCBC and related standards, including the Monitoring and Signaling to a Fire Department have also been met.

When a Fire Alarm System is installed it is required to be installed in conformance to the current edition of CAN/ULC-S524, "Installation of Fire alarm Systems" it shall be verified in conformance to the current edition of CAN/ULC-5537, "Verification of fire alarm Systems". With the exception of scenario, one listed in the ULC bulletin 2006-03, which is included in this Advisory, only ULC Listed Fire Alarm Verification companies will be acceptable to the authorities having jurisdiction for the purposes of Verifying a Fire Alarm System. The submission of a ULC Certificate issued by ULC of the Fire Alarm Verification is the only acceptable evidence of confirming compliance.

When Monitoring and Signaling to a Municipal Fire Department are required to be installed or are voluntarily installed on a Fire Alarm System they shall be installed in conformance with the current edition of CAN/ULC-S561, "Installation and Services for Fire Signal Receiving Centres and Systems", and must notify the Municipal Fire Department as required in 3.2.4.7. of the 2018 BCBC. Only ULC Certified "Fire Signal Receiving Centres", will be acceptable to the authorities having jurisdiction for the purposes of Monitoring and Signaling a Municipal Fire Department. The only acceptable evidence of confirming compliance is the submission of a ULC Protective Signaling Certificate which is issued by ULC.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE 2018 BCBC

Article 3.2.4.5. Installation and Verification of Fire Alarm Systems

1) Fire alarm systems, including the voice communication capability where provided, shall be installed in conformance with CAN/ULC-S524, "Installation of Fire Alarm Systems."

2) Fire alarm systems shall be verified in conformance with CAN/ULC-S537, "Verification of Fire Alarm Systems," to ensure they are operating satisfactorily.



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Article 3.2.4.7. Signals to Fire Department

- 1) A single stage fire alarm system installed in a *building of assembly occupancy* that has an *occupant load* more than 300 shall be designed to notify the fire department, in conformance with Sentence (4), that an *alarm signal* has been initiated.
- 2) A fire alarm system that includes waterflow-indicating devices shall be designed to notify the fire department in conformance with Sentence (4) when an alarm is initiated.
- 3) A 2-stage fire alarm system shall be designed to notify the fire department, in conformance with Sentence (4), that an *alert signal* has been initiated.
- 4) Notification of the fire department, as required by Sentences (1), (2) and (3), shall be provided in conformance with CAN/ULC-S561, "Installation and Services for Fire Signal Receiving Centres and Systems."

(See Note A-3.2.4.7.(4).)

A-3.2.4.7.(4) Design and Installation of Fire Department Notification. In some jurisdictions, the fire department may utilize, or have available, a municipal fire alarm system or equipment intended for receiving notification by means of a direct connection. If used, it is expected that these systems and installations conform to the requirements of Sentence (4) so as to achieve and provide a uniform and reliable level of service. It is also intended that a proprietary central station as well as a fire brigade used by a large corporation, university campus or similar site comply with Sentence (4).

CAN/ULC-S561, "Installation and Services for Fire Signal Receiving Centres and Systems," which is referenced in Sentence 3.2.4.7.(4), and CAN/ULC-S524, "Installation of Fire Alarm Systems," which is referenced in Sentence 3.2.4.5.(1), go hand-in-hand: conformity to CAN/ULC-S561 entails conformity with the fire alarm system components required in that standard, which include the fire alarm transmitter (signal transmitting unit), the interconnections, and the communication path.

- 5) Where a single stage fire alarm system is installed in a *building* that is not *sprinklered* throughout and Sentence (1) does not apply, a legible notice that is not easily removed shall be affixed to the wall near each manual station stating
 - a) that the fire department is to be notified in the event of a fire emergency, and
 - b) the emergency telephone number for the municipality or for the fire department

(see Note A-3.2.4.7.(5)(b)).

A-3.2.4.7.(5)(b) Emergency Telephone Number. In many municipalities an emergency telephone number, for example 911, is used for all emergency services and it is preferable to post that number.

- 6) Helicopter landing areas on roofs shall be provided with telephone extensions or means to notify the fire department.



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Corporate Headquarters

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An affiliate of Underwriters Laboratories Inc.

June 29, 2006

STANDARDS BULLETIN 2006-03

INTERPRETATION: FIRE ALARM SYSTEM VERIFICATION — NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS/COMPANIES (PARTIES) REQUIRED

CAN/ULC-S537-04, Verification of Fire Alarm Systems

The following is an interpretation by the ULC Subcommittee on Installation, Inspection and Testing, and Verification of Fire Alarm Systems, on CAN/ULC-S537-04 (Verification of Fire Alarm Systems) with regards to the verification of fire alarm systems.

This interpretation is being issued to provide guidance and clarification for the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) and the fire alarm industry in general.

The request for interpretation originates from the Preface of CAN/ULC-S537-04, which states:

"...The requirements of this Standard contemplates that the verification procedure described herein will be conducted by an organization other than the installing contractor and designer, and that the verification will be carried out by qualified personnel in the employ of an organization acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction. Refer to Appendix A, Qualified Personnel..."

Specifically, this relates to the portion of the Preface statement that recommends that the verification procedure should be conducted by an organization other than the installing contractor and designer.

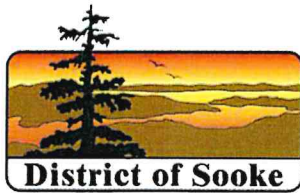
It is important to note that the normative (mandatory) part of CAN/ULC-S537-04 (and all ULC Standards) starts from the Scope (Section 1) up to and including all Figures. Appendices may be either normative or informative and are stated as such.

All ULC standards contain a Preface, which provides informative (non-mandatory) elements about the contents of the standard. In the case of CAN/ULC-S537-04, the Preface paragraph quoted above would be considered "administrative". Administrative requirements are not permitted in the body of a "technical" Standard. The AHJ may enforce some or all portions of the Preface or any informative appendix. Consequently, it is conceivable that the AHJ may, at their option, enforce the portion of the Preface in CAN/ULC-S537-04 that relates to verification of fire alarm systems.

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This Standards Bulletin is being issued in order to provide guidance to the AHJ such that the enforcement of the intent of this Preface statement is consistent with the Subcommittee interpretation (recommended approach). The approach takes into consideration that there are recognized provincial and territorial qualification requirements regarding those who design, install, verify, test and maintain fire alarm systems.

Other than the Preface, there is no other requirement in CAN/ULC-S537-04 that states that an organization other than the installing contractor and designer shall conduct the fire alarm system verification. Since this is not addressed in the mandatory portions of CAN/ULC-S537-04, the following is the Subcommittee's recommended approach with regards to fire alarm system verifications, which is based on best practice and what the Subcommittee had intended:

- A fire alarm system is designed by, and/or reviewed and signed by a professional engineer (i.e. Party 1). Refer to Appendix C1 (Fire Alarm System Verification Report), of the Standard. The designer is independent from the installing contractor and fire alarm company.
- A licensed electrician who is preferably also a fire alarm technician installs the fire alarm system (i.e. Party 2). Refer to Appendix C1 (Fire Alarm System Verification Report), of the Standard. The installing contractor is independent from the designer and the fire alarm company.
- A fire alarm technician who has received factory training on the specific fire alarm system conducts the verification (i.e. Party 3). Refer to Appendix C1 (Fire Alarm System Verification Report), of the Standard. The fire alarm technician is independent from the designer and the installing contractor.
- All verification forms required by CAN/ULC-S537-04 are to be fully completed.

Refer to the accompanying Table that illustrates possible fire alarm system verification scenarios as examples of those that comply and those that do not comply with the Preface statement.

The above process is outlined as Scenario #1 in the Table. In this scenario, the intent of Preface is met and there would be no need to have an additional organization to conduct the verification.

Scenarios #2 and #3 in the Table outline processes where an additional organization (Party 4) would be required to conduct the verification based on the intent of the Preface.

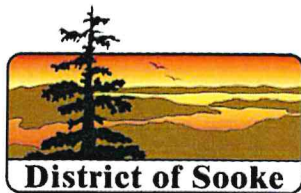
Scenario #4 in the Table would not meet the intent of the Preface.

Should you require any additional information, please contact Mahendra (Mike) Prasad at 416-757-5250 Ext. 61242 or email: mahendra.prasad@ca.ul.com

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This Standard can be ordered through our website at www.ulc.ca and selecting ULC Online Store. Next, enter "S537" in Search box and click Search.

Yours truly,

G. Rae Dulmage
Director, Standards Department

FIRE ALARM SYSTEM VERIFICATION PROCESS EXAMPLE SCENARIOS	(Party 1) FIRE ALARM SYSTEM DESIGN AND SIGN-OFF (i.e. by a professional engineer)	(Party 2) FIRE ALARM SYSTEM INSTALLATION AND SIGN-OFF (i.e. by a licensed electrician)	(Party 3) FIRE ALARM SYSTEM VERIFICATION* (i.e. by a fire alarm company technician)	IS A 4 TH PARTY REQUIRED FOR THE FIRE ALARM SYSTEM VERIFICATION** (i.e. a knowledgeable, recognized company, or person)	DOES THIS SCENARIO MEET THE INTENT OF THE PREFACE OF CAN/ULC-S537?
Scenario #1	By an Independent Designer***	By an Electrical Contractor	By Fire Alarm Company No. 1 Technician	NOT REQUIRED	YES
Scenario #2	By an Independent Designer***	By Fire Alarm Company No. 1	By Fire Alarm Company No. 1 Technician	REQUIRED	YES
Scenario #3	By Fire Alarm Company No. 1	By an Electrical Contractor	By Fire Alarm Company No. 1 Technician	REQUIRED	YES
Scenario #4	By Fire Alarm Company No. 1	By Fire Alarm Company No. 1	By Fire Alarm Company No. 1 Technician	THIS SCENARIO DOES NOT MEET THE INTENT OF THE PREFACE OF CAN/ULC-S537	NO
* This verification can be done by the same fire alarm company that provided the equipment and programming.					
**4 th Party: This party is independent from Party 1 and Party 2.					
***Independent designer: Designer that is independent from the electrical contractor and the fire alarm company.					

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Confirmation of Fire Alarm Verification Form

To: *The authority having Jurisdiction*

Re: _____

Name of Project (Print)

Address of Project (Print)

Legal Address of Project (Print)

Building Permit No.

The Undersigned hereby gives assurance that we were in attendance simultaneously and participated at the time of the Fire Alarm Verification. We concur with the contents of the Fire Alarm Verification Report and confirm that there are no outstanding deficiencies.

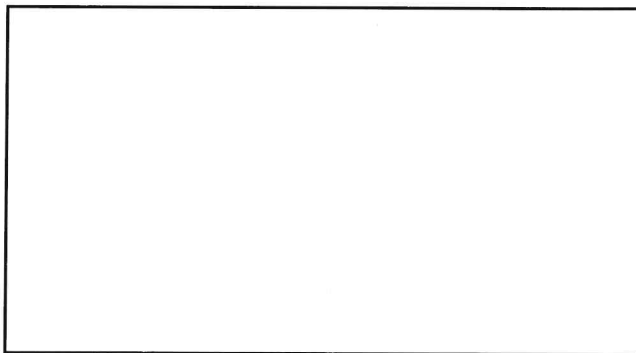
Engineer Company's name (Print)

Engineer's name (Print)

Engineer's Signature

Date(s) of Testing

Date of signing



(Professional's Seal and Signature)

Fire Alarm Company's name (Print)

Fire Alarm Technician's name (Print)

Fire Alarm Technician's Signature

Date (s) of Testing

Date of signing

Electrical Contractor's name (Print)

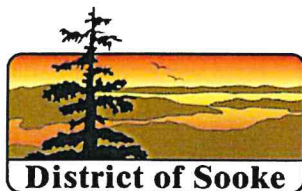
Fire Alarm Technician's name (Print)

Electrician's Signature

Date (s) of Testing

Date of signing


This declaration of the fire alarm verification is only valid if, the required signatories have signed, applied their engineers stamp. And the fire alarm technician provides proof of factory training on the fire alarm system, or a ULC generated certificate of verification will be required to be submitted.



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**Underwriters
Laboratories**

Corporate Headquarters
7 Underwriters Road
Toronto, ON M1R 3B4

Certificate Number

FIRE ALARM VERIFICATION SERVICE

This Certifies that the Alarm Service Company whose name appears below is Listed by Underwriters Laboratories of Canada (ULC) and is authorized to verify Local, Auxiliary, Remote Station and Proprietary Type Fire Alarm Systems in compliance with the requirements in the Standard for the Verification of Fire Alarm Systems – CAN/ULC-S537

The Alarm Service Company named on this certificate bears the responsibility for the verification, as well as the keeping of records respecting these activities. All required service is to be provided for in an appropriate contract between the Alarm Service Company and the Subscriber.

System documentation required to be maintained by the alarm service company for a certificated system includes specification documents and the records of the initial inspection.

The Alarm Service Company identified on this certificate has a responsibility to respond to service calls within 24 hours. Any necessary repair work is to commence within this time period and is to be continued until completion.

Underwriters' Laboratories of Canada makes no representations or warranties, expressed or implied, that the alarm system will prevent any loss by fire, smoke, water damage or otherwise, or that the system will in all cases provide the protection for which it is installed or intended. This certificate is evidence that the system is maintained by a ULC Listed Alarm Service Company and that it is subject to countercheck field inspections by ULC Representatives. This certificate is to be posted at the Subscriber's site and is valid only with a current maintenance contract.

ULC is not an insurer and does not assume or undertake to discharge any liability of the Alarm Service Company or any other party for any loss, which may result from failure of the equipment, incorrect installation, non-conformity with requirements, cancellation of this certificate or withdrawal of the Alarm Service Company from Listing by ULC prior to the expiration date appearing on this certificate.


LISTED ALARM COMPANY		LOCATION	
TYPE OF SYSTEM	NUMBER OF STATIONS		NUMBER OF SIGNALS
	LOCAL	AUXILIARY	REMOTE
REMOTE CONNECTION	NUMBER OF SPEAKERS	NUMBER OF SIGNAL SWITCHES	CUT OFF VALVE
LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	ISSUED	EXPIRES	MAXIMUM TERM
SUBSCRIBER		MAINTENANCE SYSTEM SHALL BE EXAMINED AND TESTED AT LEAST ONCE EACH YEAR	
		REPRESENTATIVE	DATE



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		Underwriters Laboratories		Corporate Headquarters 7 Underwriters Road Toronto, ON M1R 3B4				
				Certificate Number				
FIRE ALARM SERVICE								
<p>This Certifies that the Alarm Service Company whose name appears below is Listed by Underwriters' Laboratories of Canada (ULC) and is authorized to inspect, test and service Local, Auxiliary, Remote Station and Proprietary Type Fire Alarm Systems in compliance with the requirements in the Standard for the inspection and Testing of Fire Alarm Systems – CANULC-5536</p>								
<p>The Alarm Service Company named on this certificate bears the responsibility for the periodic testing, maintenance and repair of the fire alarm system, as well as the keeping of records respecting these activities. All required service is to be provided for in an appropriate contract between the Alarm Service Company and the Subscriber.</p>								
<p>System documentation required to be maintained by the alarm service company for a certificated system includes specification documents and the records of the initial inspection and test and any subsequent inspections and tests, system maintenance and service calls.</p>								
<p>The Alarm Service Company identified on this certificate has a responsibility to respond to service calls within 24 hours. Any necessary repair work is to commence within this time period and is to be continued until completion.</p>								
<p>Underwriters' Laboratories of Canada makes no representations or warranties, expressed or implied, that the alarm system will prevent any loss by fire, smoke, water damage or otherwise, or that the system will in all cases provide the protection for which it is installed or intended. This certificate is evidence that the system is maintained by a ULC Listed Alarm Service Company and that it is subject to countercheck field inspections by ULC Representatives. This certificate is to be posted at the Subscriber's site and is valid only with a current maintenance contract.</p>								
<p>ULC is not an insurer and does not assume or undertake to discharge any liability of the Alarm Service Company or any other party for any loss, which may result from failure of the equipment, incorrect installation, non-conformity with requirements, cancellation of this certificate or withdrawal of the Alarm Service Company from Listing by ULC prior to the expiration date appearing on this certificate.</p>								
LISTED ALARM COMPANY			LOCATION					
TYPE OF SYSTEM	NUMBER OF INITIATORS		NUMBER OF SIGNALS					
	INITIALS	POWER	INITIALS	POWER				
REMOTE CONNECTION	NUMBER OF SPEAKERS		NUMBER OF SOUND SIGNALS					
	WATERFLOW		PRESSURE		CUT OFF VALVE			
LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	ISSUED: D M Y		EXPIRES: D M Y		MAXIMUM TERM			
SUBSCRIBER			MAINTENANCE SYSTEM SHALL BE EXAMINED AND TESTED AT LEAST ONCE EACH YEAR					
						REPRESENTATIVE		DATE
								D M Y



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	Underwriters Laboratories	Corporate Headquarters 7 Underwriters Road Toronto, ON M1R 3B4									
		Certificate Number									
SHARED FIRE PROTECTIVE SIGNALLING SERVICE											
<p>This Certifies that the Alarm Companies whose names appear below are Listed by Underwriters' Laboratories of Canada (ULC) and are authorized to install, monitor, and maintain Shared Services Protective Signalling Fire Alarm Systems in compliance with the requirements in CANULC-S561 for Protective Signalling Systems.</p> <p>The assignment of responsibilities as indicated in the following paragraphs shall be set out in a contract between the companies involved.</p> <p>The Alarm Monitoring Company named on this certificate bears the responsibility for the monitoring of the status of signals generated by the system and for the keeping of records respecting these activities.</p> <p>The Alarm Installation Company named on this certificate bears the responsibility for the correctness of the system installation, periodic testing, maintenance and repair, as well as the keeping of records respecting these activities.</p> <p>It is also the responsibility of the Alarm Installation Company to confirm that the equipment used in this installation is ULC Labelled and is suitable for the application. All required service is provided for in the care contract between the Alarm Installation Company and the Occupant.</p> <p>ULC makes no representations or warranties, expressed or implied, that the alarm system will prevent any loss by fire, smoke, water damage or otherwise, or that the system will in all cases provide the protection for which it is installed or intended. This certificate is evidence that the signalling devices are monitored by a ULC Listed Alarm Monitoring Company and that the installation, maintenance and service is provided by a ULC Listed Alarm Installation Company, which are subject to countercheck field inspections by ULC Representatives. This certificate is to be posted at the Subscriber's site and is valid only with a current maintenance contract.</p> <p>ULC is not an insurer and does not assume or undertake to discharge any liability of the Alarm Companies or any other party for any loss, which may result from failure of the equipment, incorrect installation, non-conformity with requirements, cancellation of this certificate or withdrawal of the Alarm Company from Listing by ULC prior to the expiration date appearing on this certificate.</p>											
LISTED ALARM COMPANY		LOCATION									
TYPE OF SYSTEM	NUMBER OF SIGNAL SWITCHES			LOCAL P.A. INTERCOMMUNICATION							
	ROOM TEMP	WATER FLOW	WATER LEVEL	PRESSURE	WATER TEMP	OUT OF VALVES	PUMP-UP				
NUMBER OF PIPES											
TRANSMISSION MODE	ISSUED		D	M	Y	EXPIRES		D	M	Y	MAXIMUM TERM
LISTED ALARM INSTALLING CO		LOCATION									
SUBSCRIBER		MAINTENANCE									
		SYSTEM SHALL BE EXAMINED IN ACCORDANCE WITH NFPA-72 AND TESTED AT LEAST ONCE EACH YEAR									
		REPRESENTATIVE						DATE			
								D	M	Y	