This policy is promulgated in accordance with Section 104.1 of the 2018 International Fire Code (IFC) and is an official interpretation of Section 6.9 of the 2016 edition of NFPA 13 and Section 903.4.2 of the 2018 edition of the IFC.

The following shall apply to the records of all system inspection, tests and maintenance for fire protection systems:

Section 6.8.1 of the 2016 edition of NFPA 13 reads as follows: “Waterflow alarm devices shall be listed for the service and so constructed and installed that any flow of water from a sprinkler system equal to or greater than that from a single automatic sprinkler of the smallest orifice size installed on the system will result in an audible alarm on the premises within 5 minutes after such flow begins and until such flow stops.” It is the opinion of the Fire Marshal that this device should be a weather-proof horn-strobe. Please note that if a fire alarm is required in the building, sprinkler water flow acts as an initiating device and the alarm is required to sound in 90 seconds. The following is the Des Moines Fire Prevention Bureau’s policy on how these devices shall be installed and operate:

1.) A weather-proof horn-strobe shall be installed on a separate Notification Appliance Circuit (NAC) and shall be included in any battery and voltage drop calculations. This device shall only operate on active water flow from the sprinkler system and shall not be able to be silenced. This device shall only de-activate after the flow of water stops.

2.) In accordance with IFC 903.4.2 as amended: An approved weather proof audible device suitable for outdoor use with 110 candela visual signal shall be connected to every automatic sprinkler system.

Any comments or questions regarding the above information may be submitted to:

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