

ONTARIO BUILDING CODE

3.2.4.20. Audibility of Alarm Systems

(9) Except as permitted by Sentence (13), an audible signal device located within a dwelling unit shall incorporate a means that enables the device to be silenced for a period of not more than 10 min, after which the device shall restore to normal operation.

(13) Audible signal devices, within dwelling units that are wired on separate signal circuits, need not include a means for silencing as required by sentence (9) provided the fire alarm system includes a provision for the automatic signal silence within dwelling units, where,

- (a) the automatic signal silence cannot occur within the first 60s of operation or within the zone of initiation,
- (b) a subsequent alarm elsewhere in the building will reactuate the silenced audible signal devices within dwelling units,
- (c) after a period of not more than 10 min, the silenced audible signal devices will be restored to continuous audible signal if the alarm is not acknowledged, and
- (d) the voice communication system referred to in Article 3.2.4.23. has a provision to override the automatic signal to allow the transmission of voice messages through silenced audible signal device circuits that serve the dwelling units.

(14) If a two stage fire alarm system has been installed with an automatic signal silence as described in Sentence, the system shall be designed so that any silenced audible signal devices serving dwelling units are reactuated whenever an alarm signal is required to be transmitted as part of the second stage.

OBJECTIVE

This requirement of the Building Code provides the ability to manually or automatically silence the fire alarm audible signal device in a dwelling unit, such as a condominium or rental apartment.

Where the fire alarm system includes provisions for automatic silencing within the dwelling units, they shall not silence in the initiating zone. The automatic silencing feature will occur in all other zones after 60 seconds. The minimum 60 second time period provides the residents with notification of a fire emergency. The illustration on the next page depicts this as Option #1.

Where silencing switches for dwelling units are separately installed or incorporated in the audible signaling device, the method of silencing must be clearly identified and located not less than 1200 mm and not more than 1400 mm above the finished floor level and measured from the centre of the silencing switch. The illustration on the next page depicts this as Option #2.

In order to minimize the annoyance caused by false and unwanted alarms, the disconnect device is intended to permit a person to silence the local audible device within the dwelling unit. The audible devices in the common areas would still continue to sound and persons could plan appropriate action.

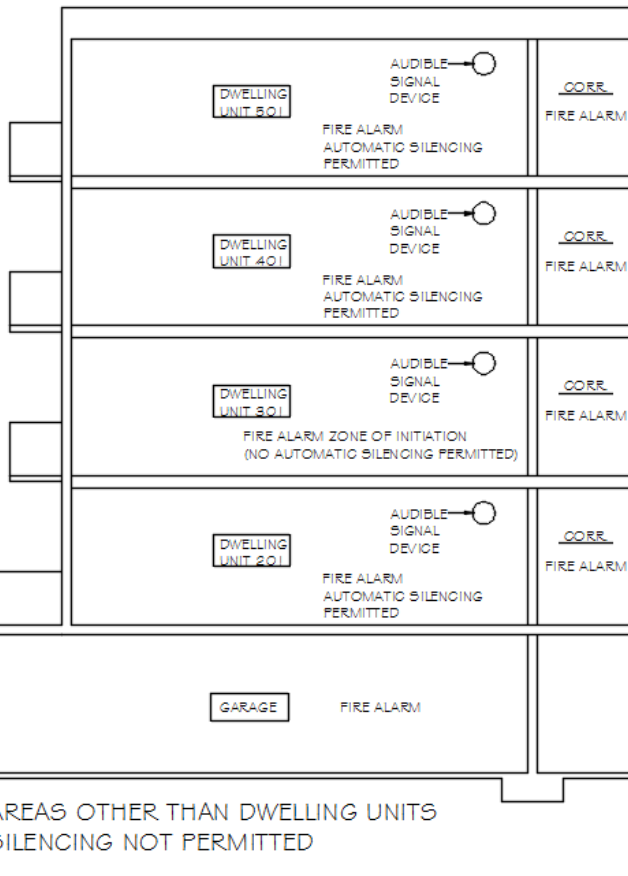
When the audible signal device is installed in a suite of residential occupancy, such as a hotel or motel, the ability to silence the signal device is not permitted

Builder Tip

AUDIBILITY OF ALARM SYSTEMS (SILENCING)

OPTION #1

FIRE ALARM
AUTOMATIC SILENCING
IN DWELLING UNIT



OPTION #2

FIRE ALARM
MANUAL SILENCING
IN DWELLING UNIT

