

RCW 35A.21.444 Electric security alarm systems. (1) Code cities that have not adopted an ordinance, land use regulation, or local code related to the regulation of electric security alarm systems shall allow electric security alarm systems consistent with the following:

(a) Electric security alarm systems may not be considered a fence and may not be regulated by fence codes which do not reference and regulate electric security alarm systems.

(b) Electric security alarm systems must be allowed on any allowed or legally nonconforming outdoor storage property. This subsection (1)(b) does not apply to properties zoned for mixed use that are not an outdoor storage property as defined in this section.

(c) The installation of electric security alarm systems must meet the following requirements:

(i) The electric security alarm is powered by an energizer that is driven by a battery of no more than 12 volts of direct current and that does not produce an electric charge on contact that exceeds energizer characteristics set forth in IEC 60335-2-76, as of January 1, 2025;

(ii) The electric security alarm is marked with conspicuous warning signs that are located on the system at not more than 30-foot intervals that read "Warning: Electric Fence.";

(iii) The electric security alarm is 10 feet in height, or two feet higher than the perimeter barrier, fence, or wall, whichever is greater; and

(iv) The electric security alarm includes a device that enables first responders to deactivate the electric security alarm system in response to an emergency, if utilized by a code city.

(d) A minimum five foot tall perimeter barrier, fence, or wall, is located around the exterior of the electric security alarm system. If the perimeter barrier is an existing fence or wall, the fence or wall must have been installed in compliance with the fence code at the time of installation. The code city may require a permit for the installation of a new perimeter fence or wall and may require the new perimeter fence or wall be consistent with the local fence code. The code city may not require any additional conditions or improvements appurtenant to the installation of an electric security alarm system.

(e) The code city may require an alarm system operator license or permit in the same manner as is required for any other security alarm.

(f) Nothing in this section limits the ability of a code city to otherwise regulate outdoor storage properties.

(2) (a) A code city that has, whether before or after July 27, 2025, adopted an ordinance, land use regulation, or local code that regulates or prohibits electric security alarm systems is not subject to subsection (1) of this section.

(b) If a code city adopts an ordinance, land use regulation, or local code that regulates or prohibits electric security alarm systems after July 27, 2025, the code city shall include "electric security alarm" in the title of the ordinance and shall hold two public hearings on the regulation prior to final adoption.

(c) Any system installed prior to the effective date of an ordinance adopted in (a) of this subsection may continue to operate if it complies with the requirements in subsection (1) of this section.

(3) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Electric security alarm system" means an outdoor alarm system that connects a wire structure to an alarm system and transmits a signal intended to detect and alert the property owner of an intrusion by utilizing an electric charge.

(b) "Outdoor storage property" means a manufacturing, commercial, or industrial property that does not abut an existing K-12 school, in which all or part of the lot is used for keeping vehicles, vessels, aircraft, equipment, raw materials, freight, or utility infrastructure in an outdoor yard or unenclosed building, provided that the lot does not include any existing residential or hospitality uses. "Outdoor storage property" does not include property with outdoor displays of items or objects for immediate sale when such displays are incidental or accessory to activity conducted in an enclosed structure and that such displays do not exceed 10 percent of the net lot area.

(4) Nothing in this section shall apply to a burglar alarm system as defined in RCW 18.170.010(4) or a fire alarm as defined in *RCW 48.19.540(3)(c). [2025 c 67 s 3.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 48.19.540 was amended by 2025 c 243 s 4, changing subsection (3)(c) to subsection (2)(c).

Findings—Intent—2025 c 67: See note following RCW 36.01.396.