

**Alarm Association of Greater St. Louis
MO Fire Equipment Dealers
St. Louis Fire Sprinkler Association**

March 4, 2013

To: Fire and Life Safety Contractors

Re: March 27th Joint Associations meeting concerning 3rd Party Inspection Reporting Services

Dear Contractor,

Over the past several years companies that provide 3rd Party Inspection Reporting Services have been contacting local Authority Having Jurisdictions (AHJs) in hopes to contract with local municipalities to administer its building compliance program.

Recently, several of these companies gave presentations at the St. Louis Metropolitan Fire Marshals Association to numerous AHJs and your local Fire and Life Safety Association representative. After the presentation, your representatives came together to discuss what potentially could be enforced by local AHJs and the positive and negative impacts that it could have on your business.

It was agreed upon at this time that there were too many unanswered questions to make a decision as to whether or not these services, if adopted by the local AHJs, would be good for the fire and life safety industries in and around the St. Louis area.

With this in mind, we would like to invite you to a **very important** meeting for fire and life safety contractors which will give you the opportunity to view the 3rd Party Inspection Reporting Services products. There will be time to discuss how this will impact your business. The intended outcome is to have the Associations develop a position to present to the Metropolitan Fire Marshals Association about our thoughts and views concerning the enforcement of 3rd Party Inspection Reporting Services.

The meeting will be held from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. on March 27th at the Sprinkler Fitters Local 268 Training Center located at 1544 S. Third Street, St. Louis, MO 63104.

We hope that you will consider participating in this important meeting and we ask that you RSVP, at your earliest convenience, to Chris Gaut at gaut@nfsa.org. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact your Association representative listed below.

Thank you for your time and consideration and we looking forward to seeing you March 27th, 2013.

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Common FAQs

What is third-party administration?

Private firms contract with AHJs to administer a building code compliance program. These firms do not inspect the system nor do they enforce the standard.

What is the role of the third-party administrator?

AHJs are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that all properties containing inspection-required systems are tracked. Based on information provided by the AHJ, the third-party administrator tracks the properties within the municipality, alerting property owners when inspections are due. It provides the property owners with contact information for the firms that conducted their prior inspection or, if there is no such record, a list of area firms that offer inspection services. After the inspection firm files inspection reports with the third-party administrator, the third-party administrator alerts the AHJ to issues of noncompliance or if problems are found with a fire protection system. Notices of violations are sent to property owners by the third-party administrator on behalf of the AHJ.

Who pays for this service?

The third-party administration firms contracts with a municipality, but at little or no cost to the municipality. Their services are mainly paid for by fees charged to the firms providing inspection services. As the inspection firms file each inspection report, they pay a fee to the third-party administrator.

Why are more AHJs considering using third-party administration services?

Some jurisdictions have limited resources to implement an effective code enforcement program; therefore, violations are not being corrected. Third-party administrators provide those services with little or no cost to the AHJ.

The transition to “paperless” reporting involves investment in technological resources, which may be costly for an AHJ to absorb.

It is designed to allow AHJs to focus on recommended timelines in code standards that will result in consistent enforcement practices with the goal of lowering the number of repeat violations.