

# First Things First...

**Did you know** that there are actually 2 different chapters in NFPA 72 that relate to the systems responsible for the reporting of fire alarms from a protected premise (property) to a fire department?

**NFPA 72 Chapter 8 Supervising Station Fire Alarm Systems** and **NFPA 72 Chapter 9 Public Fire Alarm Reporting Systems** both relate to systems which can be utilized to report alarms to the fire department from protected premises (properties) throughout the community.

## So what's the difference between the two Chapters?

**Chapter 9 Public Alarm Reporting Systems** date back to the 1800's before radio, landline phones and cellular phones. They were created to provide the public a means to manually signal fire alarms to the fire department when there simply was no other means or easily accessible means. Over the years they adopted the additional function of reporting alarms from automatic protected premise fire alarm systems to the fire department.

Today, public alarm reporting systems still exist but are primarily used for the reporting of protected premise fire alarm systems to the fire department. Publicly accessible street boxes still exist as well but are rarely used. Due to the emergence of landline phones and the extreme popularity and proliferation of cellular phones, street boxes for the most part have become a thing of the past. Many cities and towns have actually elected to remove street boxes due to their lack of use and the expense of maintaining something that is no longer used.

**Chapter 8 Supervising Station Systems** have always related to the primary function of reporting alarms from protected premise fire alarm systems to a constantly-attended location responsible for initiating the appropriate action in response to the alarm signal received. **Supervising Station Systems clearly have to meet far more stringent requirements in regards to the transmission of alarm signals** when compared to Public Alarm Reporting Systems.

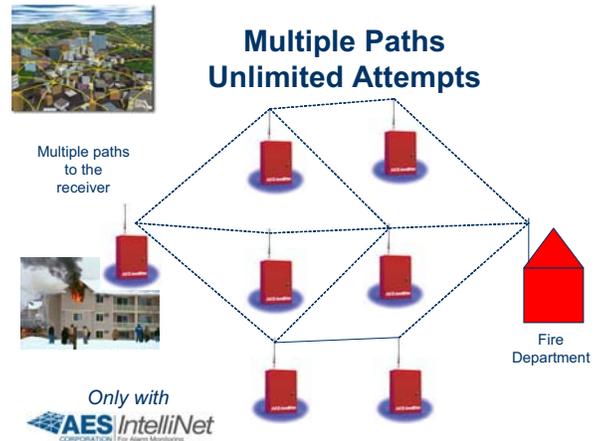
Turn the page for examples...



4 Pequot Way Canton, Ma. 02021  
Phone (800) 879-3117  
Fax (781) 828-3719  
[www.easton-electronics.com](http://www.easton-electronics.com)

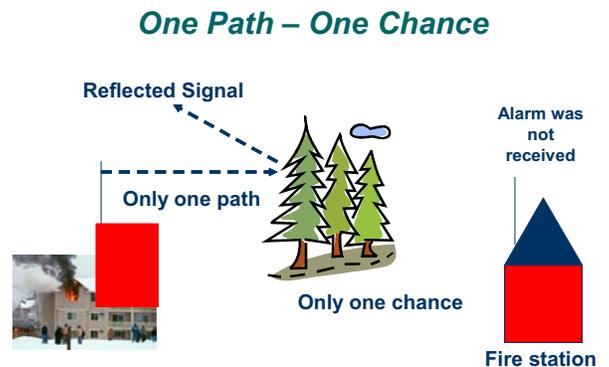
## Chapter 8 Supervising Station Systems are:

- **REQUIRED** to utilize full 2 way communications with the receiver which is responsible for receiving alarm signals
- **REQUIRED** to know if the receiver received the signal and received it correctly
- **REQUIRED** to continue to retransmit any signals which were not acknowledged as received by the receiver
- **REQUIRED** to always have at least (2) transmission paths (a primary and a backup) between the transmitter and the receiver. The transmitter must constantly verify that these paths are functional and provide an alert if any are not.
- **REQUIRED** to be capable of automatically switching between the primary and backup paths in the event of a failure of either one.



## Chapter 9 Public Alarm Reporting Systems are:

- **NOT REQUIRED** to have at least two transmission paths (and most don't). Since they are **NOT required** to have more than one path they also are **NOT required** to be able to switch paths since they usually only have one path in the first place.
- **NOT REQUIRED** to utilize 2 way communications with the receiver (and most don't).
- **NOT REQUIRED** to confirm that its signal was received. It is allowed to blindly send alarms without ever knowing if they were received (and most do).
- **NOT REQUIRED** to resend it's signal if the receiver did not receive the initial signal (and most do not as they utilize one way communications so they have no means to provide an acknowledgment of receipt of signal back to the transmitter)



***Make an informed decision.*** These are just some of the examples of the differences between Chapter 8 and Chapter 9. We encourage you not to take our word for it but instead to verify it for yourself. It's as simple as picking up NFPA 72 and comparing the two chapters.

***Your community deserves the very best protection –  
a little extra research will help to assure that's exactly what you are providing!***