
SENATE BILL 5549

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2023 Regular Session

By Senators Rivers, Hunt, and Lovick

Read first time 01/25/23. Referred to Committee on Local Government,
Land Use & Tribal Affairs.

1 AN ACT Relating to electric security alarm systems; adding a new
2 section to chapter 35.21 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 35A.21
3 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 36.01 RCW; and creating a new
4 section.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that recent changes
7 in alarm system technology can have beneficial effects on protecting
8 industrial and commercial property owners from ongoing theft as well
9 as minimize the demand on local government policing and judicial
10 resources. The legislature further finds that state and local
11 building codes related to electric security alarm systems vary widely
12 from jurisdiction to jurisdiction and that a uniform definition and
13 application of a statewide standard for installation of such systems
14 would be beneficial to industrial and commercial property owners. It
15 is, therefore, the intent of the legislature to establish a statewide
16 standard for the installation and operation of electric security
17 alarm systems in order to streamline adoption and provide certainty
18 for installation of such systems.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 35.21
20 RCW to read as follows:

1 (1) Cities and towns must allow the installation of electric
2 security alarm systems for property not zoned or used exclusively for
3 residential use. Cities and towns may adopt and enforce ordinances,
4 land use regulations, or building codes related to electric security
5 alarm systems, but may not:

6 (a) Prohibit the installation or use of electric security alarm
7 systems;

8 (b) Impose installation or operational requirements inconsistent
9 with IEC standards or this section for an alarm system or an electric
10 security alarm system;

11 (c) Require a permit for the installation or use of an electric
12 security alarm system that is additional to an alarm system permit
13 issued by the local government.

14 (2) An electric security alarm system as covered under this
15 section may not be considered or regulated as a structure or fence
16 under Washington state building codes.

17 (3) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions
18 apply:

19 (a) "Alarm system" means any electrical, mechanical, or
20 electronic device or sensor used to prevent, detect, or alert a
21 property owner or law enforcement of burglary, theft, or intrusion of
22 real property or a structure.

23 (b) "Electric security alarm system" means a battery-charged
24 fence that interfaces with an alarm system in a manner that enables a
25 connected alarm system to transmit a signal intended to notify the
26 property owner or summon law enforcement in response to an intrusion
27 and has an energizer that is driven by battery. An electric security
28 alarm system:

29 (i) Must not use a battery that is more than 12 volts of direct
30 current;

31 (ii) Must not produce an electric charge on contact that exceeds
32 energizer characteristics set for electric fence energizers by IEC
33 standards;

34 (iii) Must be surrounded by a nonelectric perimeter fence or wall
35 that is at least five feet in height;

36 (iv) May not be higher than the greater of 10 feet in height or
37 two feet higher than the height of the nonelectric perimeter fence or
38 wall; and

1 (v) Must be marked with conspicuous warning signs that are
2 located on the fence at not more than 30-foot intervals and that
3 read: "WARNING: ELECTRIC FENCE."

4 (c) "IEC standards" means the standards set by the international
5 electrotechnical commission as most recently published on or before
6 January 1, 2021.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 35A.21
8 RCW to read as follows:

9 (1) Code cities must allow the installation of electric security
10 alarm systems for property not zoned or used exclusively for
11 residential use. Code cities may adopt and enforce ordinances, land
12 use regulations, or building codes related to electric security alarm
13 systems, but may not:

14 (a) Prohibit the installation or use of electric security alarm
15 systems;

16 (b) Impose installation or operational requirements inconsistent
17 with IEC standards or this section for an alarm system or an electric
18 security alarm system;

19 (c) Require a permit for the installation or use of an electric
20 security alarm system that is additional to an alarm system permit
21 issued by the local government.

22 (2) An electric security alarm system as covered under this
23 section may not be considered or regulated as a structure or fence
24 under Washington state building codes.

25 (3) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions
26 apply:

27 (a) "Alarm system" means any electrical, mechanical, or
28 electronic device or sensor used to prevent, detect, or alert a
29 property owner or law enforcement of burglary, theft, or intrusion of
30 real property or a structure.

31 (b) "Electric security alarm system" means a battery-charged
32 fence that interfaces with an alarm system in a manner that enables a
33 connected alarm system to transmit a signal intended to notify the
34 property owner or summon law enforcement in response to an intrusion
35 and has an energizer that is driven by battery. An electric security
36 alarm system:

37 (i) Must not use a battery that is more than 12 volts of direct
38 current;

1 (ii) Must not produce an electric charge on contact that exceeds
2 energizer characteristics set for electric fence energizers by IEC
3 standards;

4 (iii) Must be surrounded by a nonelectric perimeter fence or wall
5 that is at least five feet in height;

6 (iv) May not be higher than the greater of 10 feet in height or
7 two feet higher than the height of the nonelectric perimeter fence or
8 wall; and

9 (v) Must be marked with conspicuous warning signs that are
10 located on the fence at not more than 30-foot intervals and that
11 read: "WARNING: ELECTRIC FENCE."

12 (c) "IEC standards" means the standards set by the international
13 electrotechnical commission as most recently published on or before
14 January 1, 2021.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 36.01
16 RCW to read as follows:

17 (1) Counties must allow the installation of electric security
18 alarm systems for property not zoned or used exclusively for
19 residential use. Counties may adopt and enforce ordinances, land use
20 regulations, or building codes related to electric security alarm
21 systems, but may not:

22 (a) Prohibit the installation or use of electric security alarm
23 systems;

24 (b) Impose installation or operational requirements inconsistent
25 with IEC standards or this section for an alarm system or an electric
26 security alarm system;

27 (c) Require a permit for the installation or use of an electric
28 security alarm system that is additional to an alarm system permit
29 issued by the local government.

30 (2) An electric security alarm system as covered under this
31 section may not be considered or regulated as a structure or fence
32 under Washington state building codes.

33 (3) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions
34 apply:

35 (a) "Alarm system" means any electrical, mechanical, or
36 electronic device or sensor used to prevent, detect, or alert a
37 property owner or law enforcement of burglary, theft, or intrusion of
38 real property or a structure.

1 (b) "Electric security alarm system" means a battery-charged
2 fence that interfaces with an alarm system in a manner that enables a
3 connected alarm system to transmit a signal intended to notify the
4 property owner or summon law enforcement in response to an intrusion
5 and has an energizer that is driven by battery. An electric security
6 alarm system:

7 (i) Must not use a battery that is more than 12 volts of direct
8 current;

9 (ii) Must not produce an electric charge on contact that exceeds
10 energizer characteristics set for electric fence energizers by IEC
11 standards;

12 (iii) Must be surrounded by a nonelectric perimeter fence or wall
13 that is at least five feet in height;

14 (iv) May not be higher than the greater of 10 feet in height or
15 two feet higher than the height of the nonelectric perimeter fence or
16 wall; and

17 (v) Must be marked with conspicuous warning signs that are
18 located on the fence at not more than 30-foot intervals and that
19 read: "WARNING: ELECTRIC FENCE."

20 (c) "IEC standards" means the standards set by the international
21 electrotechnical commission as most recently published on or before
22 January 1, 2021.

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