CATEGORIES FOR FIRE ALARM SYSTEM REPLACEMENT PARTS (UTHH)

Background

In order to ensure that an installed fire alarm system is functioning properly, it must be periodically tested and maintained. When system parts are found not to be functioning properly, these parts need to be replaced and the system restored to its completely functional status. During this process, it is important to utilize replacement parts that are electrically and functionally compatible with the fire alarm system.

Obtaining replacement parts is not a concern as long as the part or product is part of current production. The manufacturer can supply a complete Listed product or, in some cases, labeled subassemblies of complete products. However, when a product becomes obsolete due to technological advancements, changes in standards or codes and is no longer in current production, finding parts to repair an installed fire alarm system becomes difficult and, in some cases, impossible.

Manufacturers and Authorities Having Jurisdiction requested the development of a program that makes available replacement parts with third-party certification for obsolete products. Accordingly, UL established a new category entitled, “Fire Alarm System Replacement Parts.”

Application

The objective of this category is to establish Classification and Follow-Up Service on fire alarm parts needed to maintain compatibility and functionality of an installed fire alarm system. The parts Classified under this category are those that, at one time, were eligible to bear the UL Listing Mark, but, because of changes to the UL Listing Standards or ANSI/NFPA 72, “National Fire Alarm Code,” no longer comply with current requirements and are therefore not eligible to bear the UL Listing Mark. Those parts that meet the requirements set forth in the following are eligible to bear the UL Classification Mark. The UL Classification Mark includes the edition date of the “National Fire Alarm Code” appropriate to the proper use and installation of the replacement parts.

A fire alarm system replacement part, as used in the context of this category, may be either a complete product, such as a smoke detector or control unit, or it may be subassemblies of these complete products that are suitable for field installation, such as plug-in modules of a control unit. The origin of these parts may be

1) parts which have been removed from a previously installed fire alarm system that has been serviced, or

...
2) parts that are newly manufactured in accordance with the requirements in effect at the time the original Listing was withdrawn. If the part is not newly manufactured, the UL Classification Mark will indicate that the part has been serviced.

Replacement parts covered under this category are intended solely for the purpose of effecting maintenance and repair of an existing fire alarm system where the use of currently Listed products would not be compatible. This category is not intended as a mechanism to avoid the use of currently Listed alarm system products when issues of compatibility are of no concern. In addition, these replacement parts are not intended for new system installation where the fire protection objective can be met through currently Listed products. The use of replacement parts in existing systems shall be with the approval of the Authority Having Jurisdiction.

Investigation Requirements

Before UL will undertake an investigation for Classification of replacement part, the following criteria must exist:

1. The complete product that was originally Listed is no longer eligible to bear the UL Listing Mark due to revisions in UL and NFPA standards. If the complete product meets current UL and NFPA requirements, the product and any replacement parts of that product will be subjected to UL’s normal Listing procedures.

2. Evidence must exist that the replacement part is needed in order to maintain compatibility and functionality of the installed fire alarm system. Fire alarm products that are universally acceptable to use with any fire alarm system, provided the electrical ratings are appropriate, are not candidates for Classification under this category. Examples of such products are manual pull stations, and heat detectors and 4-wire smoke detectors that utilize dry relay contacts for signaling of an alarm condition.

3. Revisions to the requirements in the UL and NFPA standards since the time the original part was Listed should not have involved significant safety issues that include the need for public notices, product recalls or other types of similar notices.

4. Records (withdrawn UL Reports/FUS Procedures) must be available to allow UL to determine that the product was previously Listed and the records need to completely document the product description.

In addition to the above conditions, the manufacturer of a replacement part must possess the following:

1. The replacement part manufacturer must establish a factory or service center where fabrication or servicing will be performed and where UL’s Follow-Up Service will be implemented. Field servicing and repair of fire alarm equipment is not covered under this category.
2. The replacement part manufacturer must possess all design documentation, such as schematics, parts list, and printed wiring board layout diagrams of all assemblies of the complete fire alarm product. Proprietary information contained in UL files cannot be the source documents used to establish Classification.

3. The replacement part manufacturer must have a documented process describing the fabrication or servicing of each replacement part. The process must describe the extent and procedures of all fabrication and/or service, as well as performance verification of the complete part.

UL’s investigation will consist of a visual examination of the replacement part end product and a thorough review of the manufacturer’s control documentation and processes for manufacturing, servicing, and performance verification testing. Since design changes to the original Listed product will not be permitted, it will not be necessary for UL to conduct any electrical testing.

When it has been determined that a replacement part manufacturer can produce or service a part such that it has the same mechanical and electrical characteristics as the original Listed product, Classification will be promulgated and the Classification Report and Follow-Up Service Procedure will be prepared. The Classification Report will provide an overview of the differences between the requirements in the current “National Fire Alarm Code” and the edition of the “National Fire Alarm Code” used for the Classification. The Follow-Up Service Procedure will include a complete product description, as well as document the manufacturer’s control documentation and processes that will be used for auditing by UL’s Follow-Up Service Field Representative.

**Marking and Installation Instructions**

In addition to the marking which is required to be placed on the original Listed product or part, the name or trademark of the Classified manufacturer, as well as their part number, will be required to be marked on each replacement part or on the smallest unit container in which the replacement part is packaged. In addition, each replacement part will be accompanied by an installation instruction that describes in detail where the part is to be used and how it is to be installed. Removal of any UL Listing Marks on the original product will not be required.