
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5573

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senate Local Government (originally sponsored by Senators Chapman, Salomon, Harris, and J. Wilson)

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 be beneficial for protecting property
8 owners from ongoing theft and may help to minimize the demand on
9 local government policing and judicial resources. The legislature
10 further finds that state and local codes may not currently regulate
11 electric security alarm systems, and that, in such cases, the
12 application of a statewide standard for installation of such systems
13 would be beneficial to industrial and commercial property owners
14 statewide. It is, therefore, the intent of the legislature to
15 establish a statewide standard for the installation and operation of
16 electric security alarm systems in circumstances in which local
17 governments have not provided alternative regulations.

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

1 (1) Cities and towns that have not adopted an ordinance, land use
2 regulation, or local code related to the regulation of electric
3 security alarm systems shall allow electric security alarm systems
4 consistent with the following:

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

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

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

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

18 (ii) Be marked with conspicuous warning signs that are located on
19 the system at not more than 30-foot intervals that read "Warning:
20 Electric Fence.";

21 (iii) Be 10 feet in height, or two feet higher than the perimeter
22 barrier, fence, or wall, whichever is greater; and

23 (iv) Include a device that enables first responders to deactivate
24 the electric security alarm system in response to an emergency, if
25 utilized by a city and town;

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

36 (e) The city or town may require an alarm system operator license
37 or permit in the same manner as is required for any other security
38 alarm; and

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

1 (2) A city or town that has, whether before or after the
2 effective date of this section, adopted an ordinance, land use
3 regulation, or local code that regulates or prohibits electric
4 security alarm systems is not subject to subsection (1) of this
5 section.

6 (a) If a city or town adopts an ordinance, land use regulation,
7 or local code that regulates or prohibits electric security alarm
8 systems after the effective date of this section, the city or town
9 shall include "electric security alarm" in the title of the ordinance
10 and shall hold two public hearings on the regulation prior to final
11 adoption.

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

16 (3) For the purposes of this section:

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

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

32 (4) Nothing in this section applies to a burglar alarm system as
33 defined in RCW 18.170.010 or a fire alarm as defined in RCW
34 48.19.540(3).

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

37 (1) Code cities that have not adopted an ordinance, land use
38 regulation, or local code related to the regulation of electric

1 security alarm systems shall allow electric security alarm systems
2 consistent with the following:

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

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

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

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

16 (ii) Be marked with conspicuous warning signs that are located on
17 the system at not more than 30-foot intervals that read "Warning:
18 Electric Fence.";

19 (iii) Be 10 feet in height, or two feet higher than the perimeter
20 barrier, fence, or wall, whichever is greater; and

21 (iv) Include a device that enables first responders to deactivate
22 the electric security alarm system in response to an emergency, if
23 utilized by a code city;

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

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

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

39 (2) A code city that has, whether before or after the effective
40 date of this section, adopted an ordinance, land use regulation, or

1 local code that regulates or prohibits electric security alarm
2 systems is not subject to subsection (1) of this section.

3 (a) If a code city adopts an ordinance, land use regulation, or
4 local code that regulates or prohibits electric security alarm
5 systems after the effective date of this section, the city shall
6 include "electric security alarm" in the title of the ordinance and
7 shall hold two public hearings on the regulation prior to final
8 adoption.

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

13 (3) For the purposes of this section:

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

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

29 (4) Nothing in this section applies to a burglar alarm system as
30 defined in RCW 18.170.010 or a fire alarm as defined in RCW
31 48.19.540(3).

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

34 (1) Counties that have not adopted an ordinance, land use
35 regulation, or local code related to the regulation of electric
36 security alarm systems shall allow electric security alarm systems
37 consistent with the following:

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

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

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

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

14 (ii) Be marked with conspicuous warning signs that are located on
15 the system at not more than 30-foot intervals that read "Warning:
16 Electric Fence.";

17 (iii) Be 10 feet in height, or two feet higher than the perimeter
18 barrier, fence, or wall, whichever is greater; and

19 (iv) Include a device that enables first responders to deactivate
20 the electric security alarm system in response to an emergency, if
21 utilized by a county;

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

31 (e) The county may require an alarm system operator license or
32 permit in the same manner as is required for any other security
33 alarm; and

34 (f) Nothing in this section limits the ability of a county to
35 otherwise regulate outdoor storage properties.

36 (2) A county that has, whether before or after the effective date
37 of this section, adopted an ordinance, land use regulation, or local
38 code that regulates or prohibits electric security alarm systems is
39 not subject to subsection (1) of this section.

1 (a) If a county adopts an ordinance, land use regulation, or
2 local code that regulates or prohibits electric security alarm
3 systems after the effective date of this section, the county shall
4 include "electric security alarm" in the title of the ordinance and
5 shall hold two public hearings on the regulation prior to final
6 adoption.

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

11 (3) For the purposes of this section:

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

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

27 (4) Nothing in this section applies to a burglar alarm system as
28 defined in RCW 18.170.010 or a fire alarm as defined in RCW
29 48.19.540(3).

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