Alarm System Certificate Service
"UL's Certificate Verification Service (ULCVS) Program"

Background

UL's Certificate Verification Service (ULCVS) Program

Underwriter's Laboratories Certificate Verification Service (ULCVS) Program is a jurisdictional authority's access vehicle to UL's extensive database of Code and Standard compliant alarm systems. You can use this free, on-line service to:

- Identify buildings or risks protected by compliant alarm systems (both fire alarms system and burglary alarm systems)

- See the protection details for any protected property you select

- Identify the UL Listed alarm service companies capable of providing service in any area of the country you specify.

In today's environment, businesses constantly seek the most cost effective way to operate. Often, that means changing alarm service providers when a better opportunity arises. For those concerned about ongoing code compliance, relying solely on paper-based Certificates introduces the risk of making important decisions based on out-of-date information. ULCVS's direct, on-line connection to UL's Certificate database assures you the most accurate, up-to-date information available anywhere.

ULCVS is one of the tools UL offers to insurance professionals, fire authorities and government agencies charged with assuring that alarm systems and services comply with appropriate codes and standards. There is no cost to jurisdictional authorities who access ULCVS.

This service allows the underwriter or loss control person to identify and verify a facility's UL Alarm Certificate (if in existence). Currently only 1% of all alarms system throughout the US are certified by UL. Each certificate identifies the type of alarm system, the name and address of the property protected by the system, and the name and address of the alarm company responsible for the issuing of the Certificate. A description of the system installed, equipment installed, it's area of coverage and other protection details (extent of protection, line security, line supervision, vault protection, alarm sounding areas, etc.) are all included.

The ULCVS Program helps you find specific alarm details based on any of three inputs:

1. *Enter all or part of the Insured's /Prospective Insured's address* – A list of protected properties that match your input are displayed. Select one and the alarm system details are returned.

2. *Enter a zip code and select the type of alarm system (example: central station fire)* – The list of protected properties that match your input is displayed. Select one and the alarm system details are returned.

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3. ***Enter the certificate serial number (if known)*** – The alarm system details are displayed immediately.

You may also identify UL Listed alarm companies qualified to provide service in an area by entering a zip code and specifying the type of alarm system. A list of companies (name and address) are returned.

How does it work?

Certificates for installed alarm systems are available only from UL Listed alarm service companies. UL qualifies alarm service companies for Listing and for Certificate service by reviewing examples of their work. After the alarm company becomes "Listed," they can then issue Certificates for each system they install.

When a Certificate is issued for an alarm system, it is the installer's declaration that the system will be installed, maintained, tested and monitored in accordance with applicable codes and standards. The Certificated installation is then subject to random physical audit by UL's alarm system specialists. If noncompliance is found, the alarm company must rectify the problem or face cancellation of the Certificate.

It is important to ask for a Certificate when dealing with a UL Listed Alarm company because UL only audits installed systems for which Certificates have been issued.

Each Certificate identifies the type of alarm system, the name and address of the property protected by the system, and the name and address of the alarm service company responsible for issuing the Certificate. A description of the equipment installed, its coverage and other protection details are included. Every certificate has a unique serial number, issue date and expiration date.

What does ULCVS offers Underwriter?

UL offers jurisdictional authorities a variety of services to help integrate the use of Certificates into code compliance management, loss control and underwriting processes. This includes various printed reports as well as free on-line access to UL's Certificate Verification Service (ULCVS). ULCVS gives authorities real time access to the latest information in our Certificate database.

Certificate service is available for **commercial burglar** and **fire alarm** systems.

Specifying a UL Listed alarm installing company and a UL Listed central station is common practice for many code authorities and system designers. Often, these specifications are made without a clear understanding of what "Listed" means. These frequently asked questions may help.

- **What does "Listed" mean?**
- **What does "Listed alarm service company" mean?**
- **What does "Listed central station" mean?**
- **What does "Certificated alarm system" mean?**

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- **Do all alarms installed by a Listed company or monitored by a Listed central station comply with UL requirements?**
- **Does a Certificated alarm system cost more?**

The answers to these questions can be found by clicking on the above link or going to the following web page:

http://www.ul.com/alarmsystems/listcert.htm

Underwriter's Function

1.   Subscribing to ULCVS / Subscriber Application

Before you can use ULCVS for the first time, you will need to fill out an application and receive a user name and password. To start the process, go to **http://www.ul.com/alarmsystems/ulcvs.htm**, fill out the subscriber registration form and mail or fax it to UL along with your business card or a sample of our company letterhead.

When UL receives your application, UL will send you a ULCVS Computer Account Information Kit, along with copies of the ULCVS Service Agreements for your signature. Your account will be activated when you receive the information kit.

2.   Insist on a UL Certificate

As a jurisdictional authority, you require alarm systems that use UL Listed equipment, as well as monitoring of systems by a UL Listed monitoring station. With these safety checks in place, you may feel you have everything covered. But, can you be sure that the systems you oversee were installed in the same manner as when the product sample was tested at UL? Will the signals from an alarm system in your jurisdiction actually be handled in the same capable way that allowed the monitoring station to become "Listed" to begin with?

UL's Alarm System Certificate Service provides you with a convenient and reliable way to identify installed alarm systems that are currently tested, monitored and maintained to meet all applicable codes and standards.

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Conclusion

A. Effective October 1, 1996, Underwriters Laboratories (UL), in conjunction with the Central Station Alarm Association implemented a new "modular" burglar alarm certificate. The new format eliminates the numerical (A, AA, B, C, etc.) grading system most of the industry is familiar with, and provides plain language descriptions of the following: Alarm Response Time (in minutes), Extent, Armed Guard Response, Alarm Transmittal Methods, Line Security / Line Supervision, Local Alarms, Comparison of Sensing Devices.

B. According to UL, these descriptions are designed to provide loss control and underwriting personnel with a more precise understanding of actual burglar alarm protection at risk.

C. Under the new program, UL now completes the following auditing procedures:

    A. Service & Maintenance:
        1. Verify existence of service agreement
        2. Audit record of service calls
            a. Response Time
            b. Nature of work

    B. Installation:
        1. Verify the extent of protection
        2. Verify the correctness of installation techniques
        3. Confirm UL listed equipment
        4. Verify programming of control equipment
        5. Check method of transmission

    C. Operation (central station & mercantile):
        1. Audit alarm records
            a. Record times
            b. Use of keys
            c. Completeness of records
            d. Follow-up action
        2. Audit opening & closing records

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Appendix

AHJ fire program users

UL works closely with several jurisdictional authorities that require Certificates for fire alarms installed in their jurisdictions. The following communities (listed alphabetically by state, then city) currently make use of the Fire Alarm Program.

AHJ Name	Location
City of Carmel	Carmel, Calif.
Elk Grove Fire Department	Elk Grove, Calif.
Glendale Fire Department	Glendale, Calif.
Norco Fire Department	Norco, Calif.
Sacramento County Fire Protection District	Rancho Cordova, Calif.
Salinas Fire Department	Salinas, Calif.
San Francisco Fire Department	San Francisco, Calif.
San Rafael Fire Department	San Rafael, Calif.
Stockton Fire Department	Stockton, Calif.
Vernon Fire Department	Vernon, Calif.
Boca Raton Fire Department	Boca Raton, Fla.
Delray Beach Fire Department	Delray Beach, Fla.
City of Lake Mary Fire - Rescue	Lake Mary, Fla.
City of Maitland Fire Department	Maitland, Fla.
City of Oviedo	Oviedo, Fla.
Grayslake Fire Department	Grayslake, Ill
Lake Forest Fire Department	Lake Forest, Ill.
Orland Fire District	Orland, Ill.
Olathe Fire Department	Olathe, Kan.
Boston Fire Department	Boston, Mass.
Framingham Fire Department	Framingham, Mass.
Baltimore County Fire Department	Towson, Md.
Brooklyn Park Fire Department	Brooklyn Park, Minn.
Chanhassen Public Service	Chanhassen, Minn.
Coon Rapids Fire Department	Coon Rapids, Minn.

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Eden Prairie Fire Department	Eden Prairie, Minn.
Maple Grove Fire Department	Maple Grove, Minn.
Plymouth Fire Department	Plymouth, Minn.
Watauga County	Boone, N.C.
City of Wilmington Fire Department	Wilmington, N.C.
New Hanover County Fire Department	Wilmington, N.C.
Hookset Fire Department	Hookset, N.H.
City of Lancaster Bureau of Fire	Lancaster, Pa.
Reading Fire Department	Reading, Pa.
Memphis Fire Prevention Bureau	Memphis, Tenn.
City of Kent Fire Department	Kent, Wash.
Redmond Fire Department	Redmond, Wash.