READY TO INSPECT — STANDARD FIELD GUIDE

NFPA 72

National Fire Protection Association

NFPA 72 is the code behind the fire alarm system as a whole. It covers the detectors and pull stations that start a signal, the horns and strobes that carry it, the control panel that ties them together, and the off-site monitoring that answers. On site the field role is to observe and document; the licensed technician and the AHJ run the acceptance test and sign for it.

What it covers

- Initiating devices: smoke and heat detection, pull stations, waterflow and tamper
- Notification appliances: horns, strobes and speaker layout for audibility and visibility
- Fire alarm control panels, circuits and secondary power
- Off-site monitoring and the transmission path to the supervising station
- Survivability of circuits and pathways under fire conditions

What a field inspection looks at

- Photograph each device with its address or zone legible, so the record matches the panel programming rather than a promise.
- Notification appliance locations documented room by room, with strobe placement shown in frame, so audibility and coverage are argued from the photo, not asserted.
- Panel, batteries and trouble/normal status captured date-stamped; the licensed tech's acceptance test result is attached, not restated.
- Monitoring account and communicator path noted as observed, with the supervising-station confirmation left to the tech and AHJ.
- Any device left inaccessible or unaddressed flagged with a photo so the deficiency survives to punch-out.

Adoption varies by jurisdiction. Confirm the edition your authority having jurisdiction enforces before you run a walk against it.