

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 1995 SESSION

CHAPTER 631

An Act to amend the Code of Virginia by adding sections numbered 32.1-126.3 and 36-99.9:1, relating to fire suppression systems in hospitals.

[H 2084]

Approved March 25, 1995

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding sections numbered 32.1-126.3 and 36-99.9:1 as follows:

§ 32.1-126.3. Fire suppression systems required in hospitals.

After January 1, 1998, the Commissioner shall not issue a license to or renew the license of any hospital, regardless of when such facility was constructed, unless the hospital is equipped with an automatic sprinkler system which complies with the regulations of the Board of Housing and Community Development.

The Commissioner may, at his discretion, extend the time for compliance with this section for any hospital that can demonstrate its inability to comply, if such hospital submits, prior to January 1, 1998, a plan for compliance by a date certain which shall be no later than July 1, 1998.

The provisions of Article 1.1 (§ 32.1-102.1 et seq.) of Chapter 4 of this title shall not apply to expenditures required solely for compliance with this section.

For the purposes of this section and § 36-99.9:1, "automatic sprinkler system" means a device for suppressing fire in patient rooms and other areas of the hospital customarily used for patient care.

§ 36-99.9:1. Standards for fire suppression systems in hospitals.

The Board of Housing and Community Development shall promulgate regulations, to be effective by October 1, 1995, in accordance with the Administrative Process Act (§ 9-6.14:1 et seq.), establishing standards for automatic sprinkler systems in hospitals, regardless of when such facilities were constructed. In the development of these standards, the Board shall seek input from relevant state and local agencies as well as affected institutions.

For the purposes of this section and § 32.1-126.3, "automatic sprinkler system" means a device for suppressing fire in patient rooms and other areas of the hospital customarily used for patient care.

2. That, notwithstanding the provisions of § 32.1-126.3, any hospital located in a city having a population of more than 16,100 but less than 18,000, or in a county having a population of more than 17,350 but less than 17,500, may submit a plan of compliance by a date certain which shall be no later than July 1, 2003.