



Fire and Life Safety Providers

A Buyer's Guide

Table of Contents

Introduction
pg 02-05

Key Considerations
pg 06-11

Final Tips
pg 12-15



01

Introduction

Choosing the right fire and life safety service provider is an important decision for any facilities leader. Factors such as communication, responsiveness, capabilities, code requirements, maintenance needs, and more must be considered.

This guide will help you consider critical factors to protect your property and occupants. It will also list the top questions to ask when choosing a new fire and life safety partner.

You're responsible for finding the right fire and life safety service provider to protect your facilities and their occupants' safety and health.

If you're like most facilities managers, you'll likely find plenty of options, most of which carry these claims: "experts," "reliable," "customer-centric," and "24/7 service."

While these claims are important, picking the right provider is more complicated. **How can you know which building solutions company suits your unique environment and needs?**



Quality

How can you be confident that the technicians servicing your facilities consistently provide the highest quality inspection and maintenance?



Price

What can you do to avoid hidden fees and costly inspection oversights?



Service Level

There are many fire and life safety service providers, but do they all offer expert training, integrated testing of systems, and retrofitting?



Save Time & Money

Selecting the right fire and life safety service provider for your unique environment can save you time and money.

To find the right fire and life safety service provider to meet your safety needs and comply with national, state, and local codes, you need to consider some critical factors beyond what you'll find in a vendor's marketing materials or fine print.

So how do you pick the right fire and life safety service provider



Start with these five questions.



Answers to questions specific to your property type, occupant needs, and building conditions can assist you in finding the right service provider for your property and occupants — and provide you with a starting point for comparing fire and life safety service providers.

01 

What are the unique needs of your businesses, buildings, facilities, or complexes?

02 

Who are your occupants, and what special considerations might be required to ensure their safety?

03 

Are there specific safety hazards that might be present?

04 

Given the property type and/or occupant needs, what expertise is needed to minimize room for error?

05 

How is future planning handled, and what resource considerations must be evaluated?



02

Key Considerations

When it comes to fire and life safety requirements, there are a lot of variables. Your challenge is understanding your organization's unique requirements, demands, occupant needs, budget, and maintenance requirements.



Because there is no *one-size-fits-all* fire and life safety service provider, here are eleven **key factors** to consider when choosing a provider:

01

Company Credentials

- ✓ **Verify certifications and licenses** - Do all of their service technicians carry?
- ✓ **Check industry memberships and affiliations** - Are they members of reputable organizations, such as National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) and are they NICET-certified?
- ✓ **Review company reputation and history** - Have you spoken to peers or industry leaders who have direct experience with the vendor?

02

Range of Services

- ✓ **Comprehensive suite of capabilities** - Will they be able to save you resources and time by providing end-to-end support, such as design, installation, maintenance, monitoring?
- ✓ **Ability to handle all fire and life safety systems** - Can they cover multiple systems so that you don't need to seek out different vendors for alarms, sprinklers, and suppression systems?
- ✓ **Customized solutions tailored to your needs** - Are they willing and able to consider your unique needs and develop a solution that is best for your business?

03

Experience and Expertise

- ✓ **Years of experience in the industry** - Are they an established business with demonstrated reliability and stability?
- ✓ **Expertise in your specific building type and industry** - Do their technicians have the know-how to mitigate risk in specialized environments, such as educational or healthcare facilities?
- ✓ **Knowledge of local, state, and federal fire safety regulations** - Can they offer localized support with knowledge of intricate regulations and requirements?

04

Integration Capabilities

- ✓ **Ability to integrate safety systems** - Do they provide testing on multiple systems to ensure seamless functionality?
 - ✓ **Proven track record of successful system integrations** - Can they offer examples of how they've aligned disparate systems to function together reliably?
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05

Quality of Service

- ✓ **Single point of contact for all services** - Will you be thrown to an operator or have one point of contact you can text or call?
 - ✓ **Availability of local technicians and support** - Do they have a local number for you to call and technicians close by in case of emergencies?
 - ✓ **Consistent and reliable service delivery** - Do they have experienced technicians and low employee turnover rates?
 - ✓ **24/7 emergency support and response times** - Can they guarantee 24/7/365 monitoring, alerting, and service?
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06

Technological Advancements

- ✓ **Utilization of the latest fire and life safety technologies** - Does the company stay on top of the latest innovations and available system upgrades?
- ✓ **Expertise in various systems** - Can they service your existing systems and aid in future planning for upgrades and maintenance?

07

Scheduling and Billing

- ✓ **Easy scheduling and coordination of service visits** - Are they responsive and timely in scheduling service visits? Better yet, do they proactively reach out when it's time for maintenance?
 - ✓ **Transparent pricing structure** - Do they clearly explain their pricing structure and all costs and fees?
 - ✓ **Simplified billing processes** - Can they ensure timely, accurate billing?
 - ✓ **Options for service contracts or bundled services** - Can they alleviate your vendor management workload by providing bundled services?
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08

References and Reviews

- ✓ **Positive testimonials from existing customers** - Have they provided customer references in the same or similar industries?
 - ✓ **Case studies showcasing successful projects** - Do they have case studies on their website? Are any of those customers on their reference list?
 - ✓ **Online reviews and ratings** - Do they have a positive online presence? Do they have an active LinkedIn presence?
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09

Compliance and Reporting

- ✓ **Comprehensive compliance with all regulations and standards** - Are they experts in national and local requirements?
- ✓ **Detailed and timely inspection and maintenance reports** - Do they consistently complete reports on time and place them in the proper place for inspectors?
- ✓ **Assistance with compliance documentation and audits** - Do they provide accurate, detailed reports with clear recommendations for any necessary repairs or upgrades?

10

Training and Support

- Availability of training programs for staff** - Do they offer in-person and web-based training so that your staff understands basic system operations?
- Ongoing support and education on fire and life safety protocols** - Do they proactively provide updates as standards evolve?

Resources for continuous improvement and updates - Are they experts in fire and life safety, alerting you to future needs and making recommendations for planning?

11

Risk Management

- Strategies for minimizing risks and liabilities** - Are they constantly looking for ways to help you reduce exposure?
 - Proactive maintenance and inspection schedules** - Will their technicians stay on top of your systems requirements so that you don't have to?
 - Comprehensive safety audits and assessments** - Do their technicians have the experience to provide you with thorough assessments?
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03

Final Tips

When it comes to the safety and security of your business, you can never be too careful. Here are the things you'll want to make sure you do when reviewing a proposal from any fire and life safety vendor.



Always Get References

Request references in an industry similar to yours for an honest review of their services, capabilities, and approach to doing business.



Proposal Review

Carefully review all agreements and compare them against this checklist.



Partnership Potential

Assess their willingness to act as a long-term partner that aligns with your strategic goals.





Making a Choice

By following the previous considerations and tips, you'll be well-equipped to select a fire and life safety partner that **meets your needs and ensures the safety and compliance of your building!**

Let **Sciens Building Solutions** guide you to help select the fire and life safety service provider that's suitable for the job.



email

sales@sciensbuildingsolutions.com



phone

1 (925) 734 5750

Contact us for help choosing your service provider or to learn more.

Headquartered in San Francisco, California, and backed by The Carlyle Group, Sciens Building Solutions is a fire and life safety company focused on protecting lives and reducing business risk. **This includes the design, installation, provision of maintenance, and inspection services for fire detection, fire sprinkler, and security systems across a variety of commercial vertical markets.** For more information, please visit: www.sciensbuildingsolutions.com.



