

Fire Safety Act

Inspector

Training Standard



Office of the
Fire Commissioner



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Table of Amendments

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Updates made to Regional District section on page 7 to clarify copy. See highlighted section for newly added copy.	September 5, 2024

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Background

Under section 8(1) of the *Fire Safety Act*, a local authority (municipal council, regional district board or any authority prescribed by regulation) must designate fire inspectors for the purpose of conducting fire safety inspections. Under section 8(2), an individual who is designated as fire inspector must meet the standard established by the Fire Commissioner.

The standard established in this document is based on some of the applicable job performance requirements in the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1031 Standard on Professional Qualifications for Fire Inspector and (NFPA) 1021 Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications. These requirements have been modified to establish an appropriate minimum standard for a designated fire inspector.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish the minimum standard for a fire inspector designated by a local authority under section 8(1) of the *Fire Safety Act*.

Fire inspector standard

A fire inspector designated under the *Fire Safety Act* must, at a minimum, have the knowledge and skills to meet the job performance requirements described in the table below.

Where a requirement has been adopted, or adopted and modified from NFPA 1031 (2014), the chapter and paragraph number has been included in brackets after the requirement, e.g.:

- If *adopted* from NFPA 1031 without change, the cite is [NFPA 1031 - 4.2.5]
- If *modified* from NFPA 1031, the cite is [Modified from NFPA 1031 - 1.3.14]

Note: the requirements in the general knowledge category are not taken from NFPA 1031 (2014) so there is no citation.

Category	Job Performance Requirement
General Knowledge	General knowledge of the purpose and function of the BC Fire Code and the BC Building Code, including <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) the relationship between the codes(b) how the codes are to be used by a fire inspector, and(c) how to find relevant information in the codes for the purpose of a basic fire inspection. Determine building occupancies

Category	Job Performance Requirement
<p>General Knowledge</p>	<p>General knowledge of the BC <i>Fire Safety Act</i> and specific familiarity with the following parts of the Fire Safety Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (d) Part 3 – Fire Hazards (e) Part 4 – Fire Safety Inspections (f) Part 6 – Compliance Monitoring (g) Part 8 – Enforcement (h) Part 9 – Review Process (i) Part 10 – General
<p>Administration</p>	<p>Prepare inspection reports using observations from inspection data so that the report is clear and accurately reflects the findings of the inspection in accordance with the applicable codes and standards. [Modified from NFPA 1031(2014) - 1.3.14 and 1031 - 4.2.1]</p> <p>Investigate common complaints and record information about the complaint clearly and completely to aid in the resolution of the problem. [Modified from NFPA 1031 (2014) - 4.2.4]</p> <p>Identify the applicable code or standard given a fire protection, fire prevention or life safety issue, so that the applicable document, edition, and section are referenced. [Modified from NFPA 1031 (2014) - 4.2.5]</p>
<p>Field Safety Inspections</p>	<p>Inspect means of egress elements given observations made during an inspection of an existing building, so that means of egress elements are maintained in compliance with applicable codes and standards and deficiencies are identified, documented, and reported in accordance with applicable codes and standards. [Modified from NFPA 1031 (2014) - 4.3.3]</p> <p>Determine the operational readiness of existing fixed fire suppression systems given test documentation and inspection observations, so that the systems are in an operational state, maintenance is documented, and deficiencies are identified, documented, and reported in accordance with the applicable codes and standards. [Modified from NFPA 1031 (2014) - 4.3.5]</p> <p>Determine the operational readiness of existing fire detection and alarm systems given test documentation and inspection observations, so that the systems are in an operational state, maintenance is documented, and deficiencies are identified, documented and reported in accordance with the applicable codes and standards.</p>

Category	Job Performance Requirement
	<p>The assistance of a fire alarm expert may be used as required to complete this requirement. [Modified from NFPA 1031 (2014) - 4.3.6]</p> <p>Determine the operational readiness of existing portable fire extinguishers given inspection observations and test documentation, so that the equipment is in an operational state, maintenance is documented, and deficiencies are identified, documented, and reported in accordance with the applicable codes and standards. [Modified from NFPA 1031 (2014) - 4.3.7]</p> <p>Recognize hazardous conditions involving equipment, processes and operations given inspection observations, so that the equipment, processes, or operations are conducted and maintained in accordance with applicable codes and standards and deficiencies are identified, documented and reported in accordance with the applicable codes and standards. The assistance of a subject matter expert for a specific hazard may be used as required to complete this requirement. [Modified from NFPA 1031 (2014) - 4.3.8]</p> <p>Verify that emergency and fire safety plans/measures are in place and have been exercised, and that copies of emergency plans and records are on site in accordance with applicable codes and standards. Identify and document deficiencies in accordance with the applicable codes and standards. [Modified from NFPA 1031 (2014) - 4.3.10]</p> <p>Inspect emergency accessibility for fire departments at an existing site, so that the required access for emergency responders is maintained and deficiencies are identified, documented, and corrected in accordance with the applicable codes and standards, and the bylaws of the jurisdiction. [Modified from NFPA 1031 (2014) - 4.3.11]</p> <p>Determine code compliance given the codes and standards and a fire protection issue, so that the applicable codes and standards are identified, and compliance is determined. [Modified from NFPA 1031 (2014) - 4.3.15]</p>

Application of the standard

The Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC) fire inspector standard is intended to be the minimum standard that must be met by any person who is designated as a fire inspector under the *Fire Safety Act*. A local authority may establish its own standard for the fire inspectors that it designates, provided that its standard meets or exceeds the OFC fire inspector standard.

The intent of this standard is to set the minimum standard that would allow for a person designated by the local authority to conduct a fire inspection in a basic manner.

Training for the OFC fire inspector standard

The OFC will provide fire inspector training and evaluation to the established standard in the OFC Basic Fire Inspector Fundamentals online course that will follow late 2024. A designated fire inspector is not required to complete this training if they have obtained the required competencies, meeting the standard through other training and experience.

While the OFC Basic Fire Inspector Fundamentals online course is being developed, a local authority may determine the required or acceptable training for its designated fire inspectors against this standard. The local authority can confirm via the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) application form that the designated inspector meets the fire inspector training standard. It is the responsibility of the local government to ensure the PLAR is signed off accurately and that the PLAR stays in the personnel file of the designated fire inspector. The inspector standard PLAR form can be located here: [Fire Safety Act reference documents - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

Regional districts

The below provides clarity on the requirement for local authorities under the Fire Safety Act. While this document pertains to the fire inspector standard, information on the fire investigator role has also been included below to ensure a full explanation of regional district responsibilities.

- Under the Fire Safety Act (FSA), it is a requirement for local authorities (municipalities and regional districts (RDs)) to designate local fire inspector(s) and fire investigator(s).
- Municipalities will operate within a risk-based compliance monitoring model, which means that their designated fire inspector(s) will be responsible for conducting all fire inspections.
- As in the Fire Services Act, the FSA continues the requirement for all fires to be investigated and reported to the fire commissioner. Locally designated fire investigators will fulfil this requirement.
- As RDs are not monitoring entities, they will operate within a reactive (complaint based or owner requested) inspection framework. Upon request from a RD, the Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC) Fire Service Advisors, will conduct fire inspections and fire investigations.
- The RD has the discretion to use their own designated fire inspector(s) and fire investigator(s), or to request the OFC to support the inspection or investigation requirements.

- The process for how the OFC will support RDs can be found in the “Fire Safety Act: Regional District Inspections and Investigations Procedures” document located, [here](#).