

Fire Safety Act

Fire Inspector Training Standard



Office of the
Fire Commissioner



Table of amendments	
Description	Date
Document issued	August 19, 2024
Updates made to Regional District section on page 7 to clarify information.	September 5, 2024
Job Performance Requirements (JPRs) were updated to exactly mirror specific sections of applicable National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) criteria	December 2024

Please find all current and available fire safety legislation, regulations, codes, bulletins and reference documents online here:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/public-safety/fire-safety/legislation-regulations-codes>

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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) of the Act, an individual who is designated as fire inspector must meet the training standard established by the fire commissioner.

The training standard established in this document is based on some of the applicable job performance requirements in the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1031 (2014) Standard on Professional Qualifications for Fire Inspector and Plan Examiner. The job performance requirements have been modified to establish an appropriate minimum standard for a designated local authority fire inspector.

Purpose

The Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC) developed this document, the Fire Safety Act Fire Inspector Training Standard, as required by the Fire Safety Act section 4 (1)(d)(i) to establish the minimum standard for a fire inspector designated by a local authority under section 8(1) of the Fire Safety Act.

The fire inspector training 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 [Table 1](#), below.

When a job performance requirement has been adopted and modified from NFPA 1031 (2014), the chapter and paragraph number is noted in brackets after the skill

requirement is described; for example: “[modified from NFPA 1031 (2014) - 1.3.14]”.

Note: the requirements in the general knowledge category are not taken from NFPA standards. Therefore, no citation is provided.

Table 1. Fire inspector job performance requirements	
Category	Job performance requirement
General knowledge	<p>Have general knowledge of the purpose and function of the BC Fire Code and the BC Building Code, including</p> <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 <p>Understanding of how to determine building occupancies</p> <p>Have general knowledge of the Fire Safety Act and specific familiarity with the following parts of the Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) Part 3 – Fire Hazards(b) Part 4 – Fire Safety Inspections(c) Part 6 – Compliance Monitoring(d) Part 8 – Enforcement(e) Part 9 – Review Process(f) Part 10 – General
Administration	<p>The fire inspector shall be able to develop written correspondence to communicate fire prevention and BC code requirements, so that the correspondence provides an accurate interpretation of applicable codes and standards and is for the intended audience [modified from NFPA 1031 (2014) - 1.3.14]</p> <p>Prepare inspection reports, agency policy and procedures, and observations from an assigned field inspection report should be clear and concise and reflect the findings of the</p>

Table 1. Fire inspector job performance requirements

Category	Job performance requirement
	<p>inspection in accordance with the applicable codes and standards and the policies of the jurisdiction [NFPA 1031 (20124) - 4.2.1]</p> <p>Investigate common complaints, given a reported situation or condition, so that complaint information is recorded, the authority having jurisdiction-approved process is initiated, and the complaint is resolved [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 [NFPA 1031 (2014) – 4.2.5]</p>
Field safety inspections	<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 and the policies of the jurisdiction [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 and the policies of the jurisdiction [NFPA 1031 (2014) – 4.3.5]</p> <p>Determine the operational readiness of existing fire detection and alarm systems, given test documentation and field observations, so that the systems are in an operational state, maintenance is documented, and deficiencies are</p>

Table 1. Fire inspector job performance requirements

Category	Job performance requirement
	<p>identified, documented, and reported in accordance with the applicable codes and standards. (Note: The assistance of a fire alarm expert may be used as required to complete this requirement) [NFPA 1031 (2014) – 4.3.6]</p> <p>Determine the operational readiness of existing portable fire extinguishers, given field 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 policies of the jurisdiction [NFPA 1031 (2014) – 4.3.7]</p> <p>Recognize hazardous conditions involving equipment, processes and operations, given field 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 and the policies of the jurisdiction (Note: The assistance of a subject matter expert for a specific hazard may be used as required to complete this requirement) [NFPA 1031 (2014) – 4.3.8]</p> <p>Verify that emergency planning and preparedness measures are in place and have been practiced, given field observations, copies of emergency plans, and records of exercises, so that plans are prepared and exercises have been performed in accordance with applicable codes and standards and deficiencies are identified, documented, and reported in accordance with the applicable codes and standards and the policies of the jurisdiction [NFPA 1031 (2014) – 4.3.10]</p>

Table 1. Fire inspector job performance requirements	
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	<p>Inspect emergency access for an existing site, given field observations, so that the required access for emergency responders is maintained and deficiencies are identified, documented, and corrected in accordance with the applicable codes, standards, and policies of the jurisdiction [NFPA 1031 (2014) – 4.3.11]</p> <p>Determine code compliance, given the codes, standards, and policies of the jurisdiction and a fire protection issue, so that the applicable code, standards, and policies are identified, and compliance is determined [NFPA 1031 (2014) – 4.3.15]</p>

Applying the standard

The OFC's Fire Safety Act fire inspector training 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 training standard for the fire inspectors that it designates, provided that its standard meets or exceeds the Fire Safety Act fire inspector training standard, as established by the fire commissioner.

Training for fire inspectors to meet the standard

The OFC will provide fire inspector training and evaluation to the established standard in the OFC Basic Fire Inspector Fundamentals online course (to be released in late 2024). A designated fire inspector who has obtained the required competencies and meets the minimum training standard through other training and experience is not required to complete this training.

While the OFC Basic Fire Inspector Fundamentals online course is being developed, a local authority may wish to determine the required training for its designated fire inspectors against this published standard. The local authority can do this via the online Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) form to ensure the designated inspector meets this fire inspector training standard. It is the responsibility of the local authority to ensure the PLAR application form is accurate, signed off, and is retained in the personnel file of the designated fire inspector.

The fire inspector training standard PLAR form is available online [here](#).

Local authority responsibilities

The Fire Safety Act requires local authorities (municipalities and regional districts) to designate local fire inspector(s) and fire investigator(s).

Municipalities

Municipalities being defined as a monitoring entity, 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.

Please see the OFC's Guidelines for Risk Analysis for Monitoring Entities for information on the risk-based compliance monitoring model for monitoring entities. This document can be located here: [Fire Safety Act reference documents - Province of British Columbia](#)

Regional districts

For regional districts under the Fire Safety Act.

- It is a requirement for regional districts to designate a local fire inspector.

- As regional districts are not monitoring entities, they will operate within a reactive (complaint based or owner requested) inspection framework.
- The regional district has the discretion to use their own designated fire inspector, or to request the OFC to conduct the fire safety inspection.
- The process for how the OFC will support regional districts can be found in the [Fire Safety Act: Regional District Inspection and Investigations Procedures](#) document.