



BULLETIN: 2009-3

SUBJECT: Fire Protection Equipment Inspections by In-House Employees

REFERENCE: N.J.A.C 5:74-2.2

ISSUE DATE: October 27, 2009

The Division of Fire Safety has received numerous inquiries on the application of the regulations regarding in-house employees as it relates to routine inspection and maintenance of fire protection equipment including portable fire extinguishers.

The intent of the regulations is to allow in-house employees to conduct routine inspections, maintenance and testing on less than a quarterly basis (weekly, monthly, etc.) as required by code (NFPA 25 and NFPA 72, etc.), when the following conditions are met:

1. The employer has a documented procedure governing the maintenance and inspections and testing required;
2. The employer can provide proof that the in-house employee has been trained on the applicable provisions of the fire code with respect to the maintenance and inspections;

The regulations further provide that if the business entity employs a person certified by the Division of Fire Safety in the appropriate field, they may perform and/or oversee all required inspections, testing and maintenance up to and including those required on a quarterly basis. The key statement is maintenance and testing as required by the referenced code. (See Table 901.6.1 of the NJ Edition of the IFC).

BULLETIN 2009 -3
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Annual inspections and non-routine required maintenance, or items that require a construction permit must be performed by a contractor holding a valid Business Permit issued by the Division of Fire Safety.

Non-Certified In-house employees may respond to equipment malfunctions or damage that requires immediate attention provided:

1. Certified personnel verify the operation of the equipment within 48 hours;
2. A log is kept of all emergency work, including the date and time as well as contractor/certificate holder's name and permit/certificate ID number who verified that the work was completed properly and the equipment is operational;
3. That only properly trained personnel perform the emergency work;
4. The employer has a documented procedure governing emergency work;

The Division of Fire safety recognizes the importance of in-house service personnel. It is the intent of the regulations that fire equipment contractors and the in-house personnel work together to better assure the operation and understanding of all fire systems and equipment. This Bulletin permits qualified facility personnel to perform much of the maintenance of fire protection equipment required by the code, while assuring a secondary impartial evaluation by an independent business permit holder. Fire protection equipment contractors are encouraged to offer assistance as part of their responsibilities as a permitted/certified contractor.

This Bulletin will remain in affect until withdrawn or replaced. Questions regarding this memo are to be directed to the Contractor Certification Unit at 609-324-3560.