

October 23, 2017

Bulletin 2017–004-FI

Fire Safety Plans

The fire safety plan is one of the most important documents to be prepared and maintained for the safety of the occupants and for the lifetime of the building. However due to the fact that many buildings and occupants are in a constant state of change, the fire safety plan requires regular attention of the building owner and the occupants to be kept up to date. In order to facilitate a consistent approach and provide a valuable resource to the building owner and the occupants about the hazards in the building and the safety features contained in the building, Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services (VFRS) is updating the requirements for the preparation, submission, and the acceptance of fire safety plans.

Effective January 1, 2018, fire safety plans (FSP's) submitted to the Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Use the VFRS template (which is the Fire Prevention Officers Association of BC template customized for Vancouver), for the preparation of the FSP. All relevant information is to be provided.
2. Be building specific. Extraneous material is to be removed.
3. Be complete and ready for use for building occupancy, including shell occupancy. Approval of occupancy of new buildings will not be granted until an acceptable FSP is received and accepted. All persons assigned supervisory duties at the time of occupancy of the building shall be named and have contact information in the fire safety plan. (Note: "TBA" or "to be determined" is no longer acceptable)
4. Be accountable. Initial FSP shall be stamped "accepted" by VFRS. Hardcopy of stamped FSP is to be kept in an acceptable FSP box at the principal entrance of the building. The FSP box may be locked using a padlock, with the key in possession of the building manager or owner's representative, to prevent tampering.
5. Include a copy of each: building permit data sheet, sprinkler permit data sheet, and alternative solutions (related to fire protection, life safety, or accessibility) summary sheets with their related location drawings and, for Certified Professional projects, the code compliance drawings.
6. Include a copy of the fire alarm system sequence of operation.
7. Provide additional space and tab in the FSP for retention of records.



If desired by the building owner or occupants, the fire safety plan could be integrated with an “all-hazards emergency plan” in which other emergency procedures for non-fire incidents such as an earthquake, flood, or active shooter would be developed in consultation with the applicable regulatory authorities. For high-rise office buildings, a document published by the National Fire Protection Association, “Guidelines to Developing Emergency Action Plans for All-Hazard Emergencies in High-Rise Office Buildings” provides guidance.

A fire safety plan requires regular review by the building owner and occupants. Fire drills which are required by the Fire Code to be held regularly would be a good time to review the fire safety plan. Fire safety plans must be updated whenever there is a change in the list of persons assigned supervisory duties.

Except when there is a change in the supervisory personnel only, a revision to the FSP is required to be submitted to VFRS Fire Prevention Office with payment of the revision fee, for review and acceptance.

Upon regular inspections by VFRS, the records of maintenance and the FSP must be available for inspection. Missing fire safety plans or maintenance records are subject to re-inspection fees.

Notes:

1. A separate fire operations manual is no longer required in the City of Vancouver, provided the information contained in the operations manual is in the fire safety plan.
2. For buildings located at the University of British Columbia, the requirements described in this bulletin apply, except that no fees are applicable for Fire Safety Plans. Furthermore, institutional buildings in UBC are exempt from this bulletin where a Building Emergency Response Plan has been prepared by UBC Risk Management Services.

Signed,

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