

# FIRE PROTECTION PROGRAM

## *Program Element* R2-10-207 8

Each agency shall develop and implement: **“A fire protection program that complies with Arizona Administrative Code Title 4, Chapter 36, Department of Building and Fire Safety provisions. This program shall incorporate best practices and standards to protect State of Arizona employees, general public and resources entrusted to the agency.”**

**Definition:** A fire protection program is a written document that outlines the agency procedures to ensure adequate protection of facilities, equipment, and personnel from the perils of fire related incidents.

### **Where do I start?**

**Guidelines and Criteria:** An agency fire protection program is a critical part of the overall loss prevention program. This program ensures that resources (equipment, vehicles, facilities and data) and personnel are protected from loss or injury through advanced planning and coordinated efforts of the agency. Written procedures for response to fire, coordinated planning with emergency response teams, routine inspections to identify potential hazards and employee training are all a part of the program elements that must be developed to ensure a viable plan is in place before an emergency occurs.

Assign responsibility for coordinating the development of the plan and ensuring the plan is tested and updated as needed. In larger agencies it may be advisable to assign a team to coordinate the initial development of the program. If a team approach is used consider assigning employees representing facilities maintenance, information technology systems (computer data), key supervisors and employees from geographically separated facilities. When developing the plan consider the following:

- Critical operations that would be impacted in the event of an emergency or that would require a special response (such as hazardous materials, chemical storage areas gasoline/petroleum storage etc.) by emergency responders,
- Development of procedures to ensure that those that need special accommodations are considered in the evacuation/emergency response process. This may include establishment of special teams to assist those with disabilities, establishment of safe refuge areas for disabled employees/patrons and/or a notification system to ensure those with special needs are aware of emergency situations (such as horns, strobes lights etc)
- Continuity plans for relocation of critical business services

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**What are the minimum requirements for a fire safety program?**

At a minimum a fire safety program must contain the following elements:

- An individual appointed within the agency to coordinate the fire safety plan. In larger agencies this may require appointing an individual for each of the facilities or locations
- A completed survey of all state-owned facilities within the agency's control. The survey must identify the location, type and inspection requirements for all fire protection equipment
- A schedule of routine inspections and maintenance for fire protection equipment and training for the individual designated to perform the routine inspections
- Procedures for performing routine facility inspections to identify potential fire hazards such as accumulation of flammable materials, incompatible storage of flammables, poor housekeeping, improper use of open flame equipment, electrical hazards and disposal of smoking material. Often these inspections are incorporated into the inspection procedures required under R2-10-207 5 (see section of this manual)
- Procedures to ensure fire exits and fire extinguishers are marked, located in appropriate locations, maintained in a fire cabinet or on brackets and that access to the extinguishers are maintained free of blockage that would prevent an employee gaining access to the extinguisher in an emergency
- Procedures to ensure egress routes from a building are maintained free of obstructions. Doors must not be locked or blocked during hours of occupancy
- Procedures to ensure emergency evacuation procedures are developed for each facility and procedures are posted in a conspicuous location. Employees must be briefed on these procedures. Evacuation procedures must be site and location specific
- Procedures to ensure that all plans for facility remodeling are reviewed to ensure fire protection systems are expanded/provided as appropriate

**Do I need a separate plan for each facility?**

You will need to develop a separate plan for each geographically separated location or facility. You may also need to develop a separate plan or procedure if you have a facility or operation where there are unique hazards present that would require procedures that differ from the procedures developed for other areas or operations.

**Are there any resources available that can assist me in putting together a fire safety plan?**

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) web site has an outstanding Fire Safety Advisor. This interactive program will help you understand and apply OSHA's Fire Safety related standards. This software will interview you about your building, work practices and policies at the facility, to determine whether and how OSHA's Fire Safety standards may apply.

The Fire Safety Advisor 1.0:

- asks you about workplace conditions, practices, and policies
- analyzes your answers with expert decision-logic
- alerts you to fire safety hazards
- points out applicable OSHA standards
- tells you what aspects of these standards apply to your situation
- helps you conduct detailed compliance reviews
- helps you write customized "Emergency Action Plans" and "Fire Prevention Plans"
- shows you pop-up (hypertext) definitions of keywords and phrases
- gives you reformatted and very readable copy of the regulations, and other help

*You can download a free copy of this software at:*

<http://www.osha.gov>

Another resource available is the **Department of Fire, Building and Life Safety**. The Department of Fire, Building and Life Safety has been established to further the public interest of safety and welfare by maintaining and enforcing standards of quality and safety for manufactured homes, mobile homes and factory-built buildings and by reducing hazards to life and property through the maintenance and enforcement of the state fire code. It is also the purpose of the department to establish a procedure to protect the consumer of such products and services.

They have a web site available at:

**[www.dbfs.state.az.us](http://www.dbfs.state.az.us)**