



**DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL
FIRE ENGINEERING DIVISION**

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**CALIFORNIA STATE FIRE MARSHAL
FIRE SPRINKLER CERTIFICATION WORKGROUP
Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Date: May 12, 2015

Location: Sacramento International Airport, Sacramento

Time: 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

STAFF

James Parsegian, Supervising DSFM
Jeff Schwartz, Deputy State Fire Marshal
Wanda Albritten, Assistant Program Coordinator

MEMBERS PRESENT

Bruce Lecair, National Fire Sprinkler Association
Randy Roxen, Sprinkler Fitters Association, California
Randy Dysart, CalSAFE
Wayne Weiz, Contractor
Tom McKinnon, AFSA
Steve Fox, UA Training Department
James Carver, El Segundo Fire Department
Derryll Bolden, LA City Fire Department
Jose Colin, Woodland Fire Department
Robert Rowe, Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board, Southern California
John Upshaw, CAFSA
Laura Blaul, Chairperson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Patrick Chew
Darrell Hefley

GUESTS PRESENT

Todd Golden, UA Sprinkler Fitters Local 709
Chuck Frame, UA Sprinkler Fitters Local 669
Reese Freeman
Stan Smith, UA Local 483
Dwight Green

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Laura Blaul at 9:00 AM on May 12, 2015.

ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Jeff Schwartz conducted a roll call and it was determined that we had a quorum.

DISCUSSION

Chief Tonya Hoover started the meeting by thanking the workgroup for their time and efforts with the program. She let the group know that there is a short timeline to meet and she needs the regulations package in June. She wanted them to be sure to address all of the issues before the package goes to public comment. Next, Chief Hoover brought up a letter she received from the attorney regarding the NFPA document. The NFPA attorneys reviewed the contract and there was conversation between them and us regarding the language. It was suggested that we look into making the contract shorter to mirror what has been done in other agencies. Our attorney said that NFPA will be sending a revised one-page agreement and the OSFM will have no issues as long as the agreement is an accurate reflection for what we are able to do and statutes are not copyrighted so we cannot grant exclusive rights. Chief Hoover wanted to make sure NFPA knew that the OSFM wants this agreement to happen. She expects to hear from NFPA regarding the contract by the end of the week and will keep the group abreast. Chief Hoover also explained that the documents are waiting to be printed and wants copies to be available for the workgroup. She also expects this to happen by the end of the week as well.

Laura Blaul began the meeting with the topic of reciprocity language and brought up Georgia and Philadelphia's regulations on certification. Randy Roxon stated he supports the Philadelphia language; however, he would recommend a required test before certification to be beneficial for the program. Tom McKinnon suggested that the group look at the other states' standards for certification and determine if they are similar to California and look for reciprocity that way. Jeff Schwartz explained the difference between the certification fee in regards to the testing and fee schedule. Tom mentioned the issue of bridging reciprocity from a sprinkler (C-16) contractor as well as crossing borders from a contractor's standpoint and considers that in the decision. Wayne also wants to ensure that people are not going out of state to get certification and then coming back to work without being tested. Bruce asked for clarification on how someone goes to another state and gets certified and if there is a delay, what the other states do, and if we allow a grace period for those who are working in CA for a few months and then require them to take a test to continue. Laura responded that we will look into what kind of grace period other states have and take a vote later and those we need to certify journeymen and recognize apprentices. Bruce Lecair pointed out that the group needs to have more information before taking a vote and keep in mind the contractors who have bidders out-of-state. The remainder of the language for reciprocation was discussed by the group. James Carver then gave a suggestion for language regarding the certification. Jeff suggested to leave language as is and add James Carver's suggestion with an "and/or". Jeff explained to the workgroup what reciprocity is as it relates to the program to ensure everyone understood. The group discussed this idea in regards to the type of inclusion, i.e. shall, and/or, may. The group confirmed that "shall" is acceptable as long as the group takes out (C), *Every four years at time of renewal or when modifications to regulations are made by the State Fire Marshal, applicants for renewal of Certificates shall successfully pass a written examination.* The

discussion continued about the reciprocity factor with other states and how to make it feasible within the program.

The next topic that was discussed was how to work with a felony conviction or someone not being in good standing and what was already in the regulations. James clarified how they cannot do a felony disqualification in regulations; it has to be statutorily authorized unless they write it in the program. The group discussed how to go about this in the certification program to ensure there would be no issues of judgment calls in the future. They also discussed how the certification process will work once the grandfathered period has passed. The issue of how many hours and years necessary as an apprentice was brought up. Some states require more or less or do not have a specific program, which makes it difficult to find an agreeable number. The discussion turned to that of possibly not having reciprocity and implementing a time frame anywhere from 30-180 days to schedule and take the exam. The group discussed both ideas in full.

Discussion began regarding the process of becoming an apprentice to journeyman to completing the requirements and testing necessary to become certified. The different options of requirements for those trying to obtain certification and who came from out of the state and those who were already residents of California were discussed within the group. It was suggested that the group add requirements for testing that the State Fire Marshal will want ahead of time so that the programs can accurately train the journeymen. Jeff Schwartz talked about the re-certification process and how it is beneficial to ensure the sprinkler fitters maintain knowledge of possible regulation changes and to protect liability of the person who signs the certificate. There was discussion amongst the group about the importance of testing after a person finishes the program and re-testing. Some were in favor or opposed to both items and explained their reasoning. Some are not good test takers and there is concern that it could cost some sprinkler fitters their job and some felt that a final test would be a validation of what they have learned and what they know.

Tom suggested the group separate the requirements for in state and out of state sprinkler fitters. Those who are graduating from a program would not have to take the additional test while those who come from out of the state have to take the test to ensure knowledge of laws and regulations. Tom McKinnon made a motion to separate the out of state requirements from the state apprenticeship program and from the C-16s. Wayne Weiss seconded the motion. There were two in favor of and nine opposed to the motion.

Steve Fox brought up the topic of testing to obtain certification and the group discussed this thoroughly. Steve made a motion to require a test for the certification program. Robert Rowe seconded the motion. There were eight in favor for and three opposed to the motion. Laura Blaul suggested a clause in the regulations that the intent of the exam is not for sprinkler knowledge, but for California law knowledge. The group agreed.

The next topic for discussion was on written exams for annual certification renewal and when they are required. Bruce LeCair made a motion that a written test would not be required to renew the certification every year. Tom McKinnon seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

The group began discussing the continuing education requirement and the appropriate timeframe for the sprinkler fitters to achieve these goals. Bruce LeCair made a motion that sprinkler fitters must reapply for certification if the continuing education requirements are not met. Robert Rowe seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

Stop work orders and progressive discipline became the next topic of discussion. The group talked about different scenarios that could happen and what would be the best way to go about citing the sprinkler fitters. Jeff Schwartz clarified that the OSFM does not have an administrative citation program established at this time. There was a suggestion made to cite the employers who hire uncertified employees to work for them. Discussion turned into who takes liability; contractors, individual workers, etc. The group talked about different scenarios and where enforcement would come from. It was made clear by the group that coordinating efforts between the local jurisdictions and at the State level was important. Solutions were discussed regarding repeat offenders and how to alert the OSFM and keep everyone informed. Bruce LeCair made a motion that Randy Roxson and Jeff Schwartz create enforcement language and submit it to the workgroup prior to the next meeting (May 28) so it can be discussed. Wayne Weise seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

Laura asked everyone to look at the Fire Extinguisher Certification Registry before the next meeting so there can be further discussion on the topic.

The group moved their discussion to language in the regulations for the trainees and how many a journeyman can supervise. They clarified that they want to use the word “apprentices”, not “fitters” and what minimum standards worked best with their goals. Specific definitions were discussed more in depth to ensure a full understanding of the language. Laura asked members of the workgroup if any wanted to try to put together some of the regulations by the next meeting. John Upshaw was nominated, Randy Dysart volunteered as well as James Carver. They will use the established language and create a rough draft to show the group at the next meeting.

Jeff Schwartz suggested that the Legacy qualifications need to be moved to the certification qualifications section

The next meeting the workgroup will discuss the registry.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for May 28, 2015 from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM (Pacific Standard Time) at the Maidu Community Center, 1550 Maidu Drive, Roseville, California. A conference line will be available.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned by Chair Laura Blaul at 3:40 PM.