



Burlington Fire Department

Office of the City Fire Marshal



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To: All Fire Alarm, Sprinkler/Fire Pump, and Suppression System Contractors
From: Battalion Chief Barry J. Simays, *CFPS, IAAI-FIT*, Fire Marshal
Date: 22 June 2018
Re: **Changes to Fire Protection Systems Work Permitting in Burlington Effective 1 July 2018**

In a joint effort among multiple City departments to continually improve and streamline the construction permitting processes in the City of Burlington, **the following changes are effective 1 July 2018** (some of this information reinforces current and past practice):

- **All fire protection systems contractors** (sprinkler/standpipe/fire pump, fire alarm/master radio call box, kitchen hood suppression, specialty suppression systems, etc.) **will no longer apply for or receive the "AL", "SS", and "SU" work permits from the Department of Public Works at 645 Pine Street in Burlington.**
- **All fire protection systems contractors seeking a work permit for "AL", "SS", and "SU" will apply for these permit types directly through the City of Burlington Fire Marshal's Office.** The Fire Marshal's Office will continue to conduct all detailed plan review, final work permit issuance to the contractor, all field inspections for rough-in and final inspections, and all acceptance testing for fire protection systems as has been the established practice.
- **Fee Structure:** The fee structure for fire protection systems construction permits is as adopted in Burlington Code of Ordinances Chapter 13 Section 59 at [this link](#). The Burlington Fire Marshal's Office is now required to charge and collect the \$10 recording fee for each permit issued. This fee was previously collected by the Department of Public Works for recording each permit in the City land records. At present, the only accepted method of payment is by check written to the Burlington Fire Department.
- **Application:** Fire protection systems contractors will no longer utilize the DPW-ISD permit application(s). Instead, all fire protection contractors are required to use the Burlington Fire Marshal's Office work permit applications located on the [Burlington Fire Marshal's Office website](#). All applicable forms are located at the bottom of the ["Fire Marshal Forms"](#) page as Microsoft Word Template documents.
 - **IMPORTANT NOTE:** If the application form is not filled out correctly and in its entirety by the applicant, Fire Marshal's Office personnel have the ability to reject submittal of the plan review package for insufficient information.
 - **REQUIRED:** Fire protection systems contractors applying for a permit that is connected to a building permit are REQUIRED to obtain the number of the issued parent building permit and list it in the appropriate block on each Fire Marshal's Office work permit application. The DPW building permit number will be in the form "BP 18-XXXXXX". The DPW-ISD Building Official's Office will create a place holder for alarm, sprinkler, and/or suppression permits required when they create the building permit, and we will be using that place holder for permit issuance as it is linked to the master building permit in the City property database. Permit applications may be rejected for insufficient information if this building permit number is not provided on the application form.
 - The Fire Marshal's Office will update these permit applications as time and resources allow in order to add in the requirement for the \$10 recording fee under the "Permit Fee" section of the permit application. Until those changes are completed, please know that the \$10 recording fee will be assessed with each permit request. **If a contractor has any question regarding calculation of permit fees, please contact the Fire Marshal's Office to clarify the total fee prior to submitting a check with the permit application.**
 - Estimated work value for any fire protection system permit application includes all costs, including materials and labor. The Fire Marshal's Office reserves the ability to request detailed cost estimates and/or final work valuations as part of the plan review process. It may be necessary for the fire protection contractor to secure an additional permit for the balance of work value in excess of the original permit estimate.

- The long-standing practice of the Burlington Fire Marshal's Office to waive BCO 13-59 permitting fees for certain small or repair projects will end with this change in permitting processes. Permitting fees will be assessed as per BCO 13-59 for all fire protection systems work permits effective 1 July 2018.
- Fire protection systems contractors shall submit supporting documentation and work plans as required by NFPA 1 (Fire Code), the VT Fire and Building Safety Code, BCO Chapter 13, and the specific NFPA standard that governs the particular area of systems work under application. Please refer to the applicable NFPA documents (example: Fire alarm plan review requirements are listed in NFPA 72) for a detailed listing of items required for plan review submittal.
- Permit applications and supporting plan review materials may be submitted electronically (email or file sharing) as PDF files, and contractors are encouraged to do so. Due to space and storage limitations, the Burlington Fire Marshal's Office no longer accepts large full plan sets for projects. Contractors may also personally deliver their applications and supporting documentation to the Fire Marshal's Office. Plan review fee checks must either be hand-delivered or mailed.
- For certain projects, the Fire Marshal's Office retains the discretion to meet with the applicant in-person or by phone as processing the permit application may require a detailed interview.
- A permit application will not be considered complete, stamped as "received", and placed in queue for plan review unless and until all components of the package, to include applicable fees, are received at the Fire Marshal's Office.
- **Plan Review and Permit Issuance:**
 - As a reminder, no work shall occur on any fire protection system (outside routine regular maintenance and testing) until work permits are secured by the contractor from the City of Burlington through the Fire Marshal's Office.
 - **Contractors are required to post a copy of all issued fire protection work permits at the site of work.**
 - When the submittal package is stamped as "received", the Fire Marshal's Office has up to thirty (30) days to complete the plan review and issue a permit as per BCO 13-59(a).
 - Under BCO 13-59(c)(8), expedited plan review and permitting will not be considered for any project in excess of \$20,000 work value. Acceptance of expedited plan review requests is at the discretion of the Fire Marshal's Office and the expedited review request may be denied for any reason (typically due to schedules and number of expedited packages currently in queue for review).
 - When the plan review is complete, the Fire Marshal's Office will continue to issue work permits to the contractor of record through electronic mail with a PDF file attachment. A copy of the issuing email message is placed on file in the department database to document issuance of a permit. A contractor may begin work on receipt of their permit.
 - **Contractors are reminded to read their permits, plan review narratives, and conditions very carefully.** These permits are legal documents, and contractors will be held to all listed conditions at the time of final acceptance inspection and testing in order to close a permit. Compliance with the adopted codes and standards in effect in the State of Vermont and the City of Burlington at the time of permit issuance is a standard condition of all issued permits.
- **Rough/Final Inspection, Acceptance Testing, and Permit Closure:**
 - Although not currently in place, the Fire Marshal's Office is working with City IT to investigate the potential to use online inspection scheduling (similar to that being used by DPW Trades Inspectors now). Until that time, please continue to schedule rough and final inspections/acceptance testing by emailing or calling the Fire Marshal's Office.
 - As a reminder, the Fire Marshal's Office requires a minimum of five (5) days advance notice in scheduling inspections and acceptance testing. This condition is clearly listed on all fire protection permit forms. Many projects require multiple personnel from our office to efficiently complete the inspection process, and coordination of schedules is difficult at best less than five (5) days out.
 - The Burlington Fire Marshal's Office is the only authority within the City of Burlington tasked with closure of fire protection system work permits following completion of inspection and acceptance testing witnessed by our office. **All fire protection system contractors are required to close their permits through inspection and testing witnessed by our office.**

- On completion of inspection and testing of a project, Fire Marshal's Office representatives will sign a paper copy of the permit(s) only if they are presented on site. Due to an increasing volume of work, the Fire Marshal's Office will not entertain requests months after the acceptance testing appointment to search through closed and filed/stored paper permit packages for a copy of a signed permit or print an emailed permit copy, sign, scan, and email the signed document back to the contractor. Presenting a permit for final signature by the inspector is the responsibility of the contractor. Our personnel will close a permit in the City property records database, and public-facing permit status reports are available through the City website for any property at [this link](#).
- **Annual Testing and Inspection of Fire Protection Systems (TQP Reports):**
 - Under the requirements of the VT Fire and Building Safety Code, TQP's for fire protection systems (sprinkler, standpipe, fire pump, fire alarm, kitchen suppression, specialty suppression, and emergency generators) are required to submit the VT DFS TQP Inspection Report form for each F-ID number and proof of inspection sticker to the Authority Having Jurisdiction. **As a reminder, in the City of Burlington those TQP reports shall be submitted to the Burlington Fire Marshal's Office and the VT Division of Fire Safety Williston Regional Office within 14 days of the annual or semi-annual (for suppression) test date.** *(Note: our office does not have access to the VT Division of Fire Safety database or reports that TQP's only send to the Williston Regional Office.)*
 - Please submit all TQP reports to bfdfiremarshal@burlingtonvt.gov as PDF files. Our office tracks the inspection and violation status of all fire protection systems within the City of Burlington and conducts follow-up activities when necessary.
- **General:**
 - If there are any questions regarding the permitting process with respect to fire protection systems in the City of Burlington, please contact the Burlington Fire Marshal's Office at (802) 864-5577 or by email at bfdfiremarshal@burlingtonvt.gov.
 - **Other than routine system maintenance or regular test and inspection, a work permit is always required for fire alarm, water-based protection systems, or suppression systems.**