



Fire Marshal's Alert!

February 23, 2006

State Fire Marshal Announces Fire Sprinkler Rule Changes

Please be advised that the Commissioner of Insurance, through the State Fire Marshal, has amended the Fire Sprinkler Rules, based on recommendations from the Fire Sprinkler Advisory Council. The new rules will take effect April 1, 2006.

At that time, a complete copy can be downloaded from the SFMO fire sprinkler web site at: <http://www.tdi.state.tx.us/fire/fmlisprinkler.html> then click on "Rules". The following is a synopsis of some of the substantive changes.

- §34.706 **Definitions.** Definitions for "Emergency Impairment", "Inspection", "Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance Service", and "Testing" were added to be consistent with the definitions in NFPA 13 and clarify the terms used when attaching colored tags.
- §34.707 **Adopted Standards.** The latest edition of certain standards was adopted. For example NFPA 13-2002, NFPA 13R-2002, NFPA 13D-2002 and NFPA 24-2002.
- §34.710(i)(3) **Certificates of Registration.** Clarifies that firms holding a Certificate of Registration - Underground is not permitted to plan underground piping systems only sell, install, maintain and service these systems.
- §34.711(g)(4) **Responsible Managing Employee (RME) License.** Adds a new specialized license, "RME-General Inspector" for individuals inspecting fire sprinkler systems according to new §34.716(c).
- §34.713(a)(5), **Applications.** Prohibits an employee, who holds the new RME-Inspector's license, to be the full-time RME that would qualify a firm to obtain a Sprinkler Certificate of Registration (SCR). The firm must employ a different RME type to obtain the SCR.
- §34.713(b)(2)(B), **Applications.** Deleted the requirement, that an applicant for an "RME-Dwelling" license must complete a course, approved by the SFMO on the planning, inspection, and installation of an NFPA 13D dwelling fire protection sprinkler system.
- §34.713(b)(2)(D), **Applications.** Specifies that an applicant for the new "RME-General Inspector" license must pass the examination requirements for NICET Level II for Inspection and Testing of Water-Based Systems.
- §34.714(d)(5) **Fees.** Sets the initial fee for the new "RME-General Inspector" license at \$50.
- §34.716(b)(2)&(4) **Installation, Maintenance, and Service.** Requires that the second copy of the Contractor's Material and Test Certificate be kept at the firm's office, in a separate file, accessible to the SFMO upon request, and no longer requires a copy to be mailed to the SFMO.
- §34.716(c) **Installation, Maintenance, and Service.** Requires that after January 1, 2008, the Inspection, Test & Maintenance service (except for one- and two-family dwellings) must be performed by an RME-General or RME-General Inspector license.
- §34.716(g)&(h) **Installation, Maintenance, and Service.** Requires that a firm must employ at least one full-time RME at each office where planning is conducted and that all planning must be performed under the direct supervision of an RME.
- §34.716(i) **Installation, Maintenance, and Service.** Clarifies that the planning, installation and servicing of all fire sprinkler systems, must comply with the adopted standards in the sprinkler rules or may comply with a more recent edition adopted by the city where the system is being installed.
- §34.717(c) **Sprinkler System Plans.** Requires that an RME sign, with an original signature (unless waived by the local AHJ), and certify, using the stamp shown in the rule, at least one set of plans submitted to the authority having jurisdiction for review, rating, permit, or record purposes and at least one set of as-built plans provided to the building owner.

- §34.718 **Installation Tags.** (*NEW TAG*) Establishes a new white “Installation Tag” to record the Drain Test and Water Supply Test information at the time the system was installed to compare with test results of subsequent inspection/test/maintenance (ITM). Specifies the tag should be securely attached by a durable method to each riser and remain for the life of the system.
- §34.719 **Service Tags.** Changes the format of the Service Tag. Changes the color from green to white. Clarifies that a Service Tag shall be attached after any and all service and can be attached with another colored, (blue, yellow or red) tag. Service Tags shall remain on the riser for five years. The Service Tag includes a check box to indicate if the service performed corrected conditions detailed on a previously attached red or yellow tag.
- §34.720 **Inspection, Test and Maintenance Service (ITM) Tag.** (*NEW TAG*) Establishes a new ITM Tag. The tag color is blue. The tag shall be attached to each riser after a complete regularly scheduled periodic inspection, test and maintenance service of the fire sprinkler system. A check box is provided to indicate the system status as acceptable, or if applicable, that a yellow or red tag was attached. ITM Tags shall remain on the riser for five years.
- §34.721 **Yellow Tags.** Changes the format of the Yellow Tag. Yellow Tags shall be attached to the applicable riser. The property owner and the local AHJ shall be notified in writing, e-mail or fax within five business days after it is attached. The notification time frame is written on the tag to remind the inspector.
- §34.722 **Red Tags.** Changes the format of the Red Tag. Red Tags shall be attached to the applicable riser. The property owner and the local AHJ shall be notified in writing, e-mail or fax within 24 hours after it is attached. The notification time frame is written on the tag to remind the inspector.

The adopted NFPA standards have many changes. You are responsible to obtain a copy and install, service and maintain all fire sprinkler systems according to the applicable adopted standards. You may obtain these from NFPA at www.nfpa.org

Attached is a summary of the actual text changes to the rules.

FireMarshal@tdi.state.tx.us (e-mail) <http://www.tdi.state.tx.us/fire/fmli.html> (Web site)

State Fire Marshal’s Office, Texas Department of Insurance