

P-8

Fire Prevention and
Control Practices

I. Purpose

The intended purpose of this safety program is to ensure all Department of General Services (DGS) employees are properly identifying, evaluating and controlling their work areas in regard to fire hazards, and that all work areas are provided with the proper fire protection and prevention controls. It is also the intent of this safety program to ensure all DGS employees follow all applicable federal, state and/or local standards regarding fire protection and prevention.

II. Scope

The scope of this program is for all DGS employees and visitors on Commonwealth property.

III. Policy Statement

DGS shall provide and administer a Fire Protection and Prevention Program for the protection of all DGS owned and managed facilities and to ensure the safety of employees.

The program shall include:

- Management of fire suppression/sprinkler systems.
- Management of fire alarm systems.
- Facility inspections of all fire alarm, sprinkler, and life safety systems.
- Management of fire extinguishers
- Training in the use of fire extinguishers.
- Proper storage of flammable liquids.
- Work practices such as limits on smoking areas and precautions to be used during hot work.
- A hot work permit program.

IV. Program Outline

A. Fire Suppression and Fire Alarm Systems

The Fire, Safety, and Environmental Division (FSED) maintains the functionality of all fire suppression systems and fire alarm systems, ensuring they are in good working order at all times. Regular testing is conducted in accordance with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Code 25 and Code 72. This process is designed to identify and promptly correct any deficiencies. Deficiencies that are identified during these inspections are recorded and communicated directly to the DGS Safety Inspector Supervisor.

B. Facility Inspections

The DGS Safety Coordinator or designee shall ensure all facilities operated by the DGS or occupied by DGS employees are inspected according to NFPA standards to evaluate all aspects of the fire prevention and protection program. Areas where flammable liquids are stored should be inspected at least monthly. The inspections should follow the Facility Inspection Checklist as specified in [Element E](#) of the AIPP.

The inspections shall include:

- Verification that fire extinguishers are placed so that travel of no more than 75 feet is necessary to reach a fire extinguisher.
- Verification that fire extinguishers have been serviced within the last year. Fire extinguishers that do not have a current certification must be taken out of service.
- Verification that flammable liquids/combustible materials are stored properly.
- Verification that fire exits are not blocked and that stored materials do not block aisles.
- Verification that fixed fire suppression equipment such as sprinkler or Halon systems are certified/inspected as per the NFPA, or any other applicable federal, state or local standard.

Deficiencies identified in the inspections shall be recorded on the inspection checklist and communicated to the DGS Safety Inspector Supervisor. Minor issues that can be corrected should be corrected immediately. The DGS Safety Coordinator shall ensure all other deficiencies are corrected.

C. Management of Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers shall be provided and properly placed in DGS owned facilities as required by NFPA and DGS guidelines. In leased facilities, the Agency Safety Coordinator or designee shall ensure the building owner places fire extinguishers as necessary.

All fire extinguishers shall be inspected monthly to ensure they are fully charged and secured with a seal. The monthly inspection shall be documented and initialed on the card attached to the fire extinguisher; this inspection shall be scheduled or performed by FSED in each DGS Building.

D. Fire Extinguisher Training

If employees desire to be trained in using fire extinguishers, the Agency Safety Coordinator, Bureau Director, or Building Manager shall ensure employees receive training in the proper use of fire extinguishers.

E. Storage of Flammables/Combustibles

Flammable liquids and combustibles must be stored properly to prevent fires or to limit the potential damage if a fire occurs. Refer to the [OSHA standard 29 CFR 1910.106](#) for storage requirements and limits.

The following definitions apply:

"Combustible liquid" - any liquid having a flashpoint at or above 100 deg. F. (37.8 deg. C.)
Combustible liquids shall be divided into two classes as follows:

"Flammable liquid" - any liquid having a flashpoint below 100 deg. F. (37.8 deg. C.), except any mixture having components with flashpoints of 100 deg. F. (37.8 deg. C.) or higher, the total of which make up 99 percent or more of the total volume of the mixture.
Flammable liquids shall be known as Class I liquids. Class I liquids are divided into three classes as follows:

1. Storage of Flammables and Combustibles Inside Buildings

The following guidelines shall be followed for the storage of flammable and combustible liquids inside buildings:

- Flammable materials should not be stored in office buildings, without the use of flammable cabinet.
- Liquids must be stored in metal cans, safety cans, or drums. The containers must be labeled according to Hazard Communication Requirements. Liquids may be stored in safety cans or metal cans of 5 gallons capacity or less.
- The storage area must be kept free of trash and other combustible materials.
- Aisles and access to the storage area must be kept free of stored materials.
- Flammable liquids should not be stored inside the basement of any building.
- A fire extinguisher must be placed no less than 10 feet and no more than 25 feet from a flammable storage area.

2. Storage of Flammables and Combustibles in Outside Storage Areas

The following guidelines shall be followed for the storage of flammable and combustible liquids outside buildings:

- Fuel oil and gasoline tanks in outside aboveground storage areas shall be in approved storage enclosures.
- Tanks shall be protected from vehicle damage by barriers or high curbs.
- The distance between flammable or combustible storage tanks shall be at least three feet.
- There shall be a clear zone around tanks and the zone shall be free of weeds, trash and other combustible materials.

- Smoking shall be prohibited within 50 feet of fuel storage areas.

3. Storage of Ammunition

Ammunition may be stored only in approved storage areas. The storage area shall be protected from sources of heat or fire, and away from combustible and flammable materials. A specific person shall be assigned the responsibility for the control and storage of ammunition. A positive control and inventory system shall be put in place and maintained by the responsible person.

F. Fire Protection and Prevention Work Practices

1. Smoking

Smoking shall be **prohibited** in all commonwealth buildings.

2. Hot Work

Hot work such as welding or brazing shall only be permitted upon approval of the hot work permit, which includes consideration of fire protection and prevention work practices, such as:

- Hot work may be done only in approved areas with an approved permit. Refer to Appendix A: Fire Safety Work Permit.
- The areas where hot work will be done must be free of combustible and flammable materials, trash, and dry weeds.
- Fire extinguishers must be available at the work location when hot work is conducted.
- Protect wood floors and other materials in the area with noncombustible tarps or fire blankets.
- Install barricades or barrier tape to prevent unauthorized personnel from entering the hot work area.
- All sources of heat or fire must be eliminated before the responsible employee leaves the area.

Appendix A – Fire Safety Work Permit

****24 HOUR NOTICE****

FIRE/SAFETY WORK PERMIT

To access the fire/safety work permit, scan: [click here](#) or scan the below QR code:

