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PREVENTING FIRES... SAVING LIVES!

...official newsletter for Fire Protection Technicians in British Columbia

NEW MANAGER FOR FIRE PROTECTION PROGRAM

Larry Barker, RFPT, has passed the torch for ASTTBC's Fire Protection Technician Program to Brian Stegavig. Larry played a key role in establishing the program and has been program manager for the past 12 years.

"His contribution to the program has been enormous," says John Leech, ASCT, CAE, Executive Director & Registrar. "Larry's strong leadership, management and administration skills were felt big time; in fact, I would say we could not have made this program so successful without him."

Larry says it was a great ride and a great experience. He attributes much of his success to staff in ASTTBC's Registration Department.

Brian Stegavig comes from a fire service background. Brian has 35 years of service in the fire protection field, the last eight years in the position of Deputy Fire Chief in charge of Operations (Fire Suppression) and Fire Prevention.

YOU NEED TO KNOW YOUR SYSTEM

You need to know the system you are working on before you begin maintenance and testing. Each fire alarm system or kitchen exhaust duct system contains the basic standard components, but each system has its own characteristics. A clear understanding is needed of the design of the individual system. Do you always have all the information you need before you begin inspection and testing?

System information should be on-site, available for the technician when it is time to do the semi-annual or annual inspection and testing. However, it is often not available on-site because it may not have been provided during the installation and verification of

the system. You can ask the owner of the building for this information in case he/she does have it. Another place you may find some of this information is in previous inspection reports, which you will always need to review if this is the first time you have been to the site. These reports should be available with the Fire Protection Equipment Log Book.

If documentation is not available, you will not be able to inspect and test the system properly. The information will have to be obtained from the original installer or manufacturer. A fire alarm system has not been tested correctly if all the components tied to it are not known or tested. Without the necessary documentation, will you know what the Temporal Code has been set at or where the isolators are located for the fire alarm system? Does the kitchen exhaust system have an ecologizer or does it just pass through the building to the roof without any obstructions other than the usual bends and turns? Where are all the access points?

If you don't have the certification to inspect or test all aspects of the system, then you can't ethically sign off that the system has been completed. Remember, you are the technician, and your ASTTBC stamp and signature on the tag are all that stands between the system working as it was designed to and not working when it is required. Only sign off on those aspects of inspection and testing for which you have certification.

This puts a lot of onus on you, the technician, but you have the training and experience to do the work as a professional. **REMEMBER, WHEN SIGNING OFF ON THE COMPLETION OF A JOB, THE SIGN-OFF IS BASED ON YOUR CERTIFICATION, NOT THAT OF THE SERVICE COMPANY YOU WORK FOR. THE SIGNATURE AND NUMBER APPEARING ON THE TAG ARE YOURS.**

June 2008

Issue No. 10

In this issue...

New Manager for FP Program	1
You Need to Know Your System	1
New Program Discipline: Verification – Fire Alarm Systems	2
Your Technica Stamp What does it mean?	2
New Publications coming soon to the FPCP Web Site	2
Tags Used Improperly	2
Sprinklers	2
New Bylaws	3
FM Data Sheet Access	3
Report it or Fix it	3
FPOABC Workshop – Campbell River	3
Magic n' Miracles	3
Strategic Plan for 2008 – 2011	4
Fire Protection Certification Board	4
FPCB Meetings	4
FM Data Sheet Access	4
Position Paper	4

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published by:

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New Publications coming soon to the FPCP Web Site

The Fire Protection Certification Board has revised a number of the publications that are part of the Fire Protection Certification Program. The revisions deal mainly with the new discipline – Verification – Fire Alarm Systems. The new publications will be published to the website in the next few months, at which time an ASTT eNews will be sent to all technicians. The publications under revision are:

- Competency Guide for Inspection and Testing of Fire Protection Equipment
- Fire Protection Certification Policy
- Inspection, Testing and Maintenance of Fire Protection Equipment Practice Guidelines

Tags Used Improperly

There is a rumour in the field that there may be a service company offering two types of “services” at different costs – a signed tag provided without an inspection being conducted at a lower cost than the cost for an inspection.

We hope that this rumour is unfounded, but urge technicians to be reminded that, if this is indeed happening, the technicians themselves, rather than the service companies, would suffer the consequences (loss of certification and employment) of selling tags without inspection. If a technician is aware of this please report it to ASTTBC.

New Program Discipline: Verification – Fire Alarm Systems

A new Fire Protection Certification Program discipline will be offered this summer. The new discipline is called ‘Verification – Fire Alarm Systems’ (VI). VI has previously been under the administration of Ark Tsisserev, the Chief Electrical Inspector & City Electrician in Vancouver. Mr. Tsisserev had initiated this verification program a number of years ago through identification of those people who could verify fire alarm systems in the City of Vancouver. The Chief Electrical Inspector & City Electrician’s list has been used by almost all the local governments in the Lower Mainland. Through the work of the Chief Electrical Inspector & City Electrician and, more recently, ASTTBC, the verification of fire alarm systems has evolved into the discipline we will be offering through the Fire Protection Certification Program to qualified technicians. To be certified in VI, you will need to meet the following requirements:

Verification of Fire Alarm Systems

1. 1 year of documented experience with
 - a) recognized academic training, consisting of either:
 - i) CFAA Course 1 – An Introduction to the Fire Detection and Alarm Industry, and CFAA Course 5 – Fire Alarm Systems or;
 - ii) equivalent training as acceptable to the Board or;
 - b) successfully achieve 70% on a challenge exam; and
 - c) a minimum of 25 systems verified, AND
2. Electrical Training Required: (Required by Vancouver Electrical Branch):
 - a) Certificate of Qualification in the trade of Electrician or;
 - b) Certificate of Qualification Restricted Class ‘C’ or’;
 - c) Certificate of Qualification Restricted Class Alarm and Communication Class ‘AC’ or;
 - d) Applied Science Technologist (AScT) registered with ASTTBC in the Electrical discipline

Your Technician Stamp - What does it mean?

We are all aware of the guidelines on how to use technician stamps, but do we give much thought to what these stamps mean to everyone else?

To building owners and tenants, your stamp means that the system has been serviced and they can feel assured that, in the event of an emergency, the equipment will work properly.

To the fire inspector, your stamp means that the system has been serviced and any deficiencies have been noted on the tag. The fire inspector reads the tag and, if the tag indicates everything is OK, he/she can continue the inspection with the knowledge that equipment and system inspection and testing have been performed in accordance with the applicable codes.

One of the things that must be immediately clear to anyone reading the stamped tag is whether the whole system has been serviced, or only a part of it. Say, for example, your company has a contract to do only a portion of a system because the building owner feels comfortable doing the rest of the work. In this case, we will use as an example a kitchen exhaust system. The system has an ecology unit attached. The owner says he will change the filters. The contract specifies that you will clean only the hood and the ducts on either side of the ecology unit to the exterior of the building. The duct work continues along the exterior of the building, then up to the roof where the roof exhaust fans are housed, but the exterior duct work is also not part of the contract.

Once you have completed the work for which you are contracted,, i.e. the hood and ducts to the exterior of the building, you stamp the tag, sign it and fill in information as required by the guidelines. How are you going to handle this situation? How will you fill out the tag? When you are answering this question, remember the fire inspector. What does NFPA 96 say? See Section 11.4.13

Sprinklers

The UL Sprinkler page provides a compilation of links to sprinkler related information.

Included are links to UL NEWS RELEASES and ARTICLES as well as the current SPRINKLER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (SIN) DATABASE.

In addition this site provides links to selected pages from the web sites of other parties on issues related to sprinkler replacement and related programs.

UL Tests sprinklers sampled from field installations as a service to inspection authorities, the sprinkler industry, the insurance industry and property owners. To learn about the program for field sample testing of automatic sprinklers, go to 'www.ul.com/regulators/sprinklers/field.html'.

For current Listing information access the UL ONLINE CERTIFICATIONS DIRECTORY.

New Bylaws

On May 6th the Pitt Meadow's council passed a bylaw which regulates the inspection and testing of fire protection systems. In talking to Assistant Fire Chief Brad Perry, the Pitt Meadows Fire Department is planning to enact their new bylaw in the next few months. They would like to give the service companies and building owner's notification of the new bylaw before it goes into effect. The new bylaw is called Fire Protection Equipment Inspection and Testing Bylaw No. 2366, 2008; this will be the 12th local government to enact a bylaw regulating the inspection and testing of fire protection equipment.

The local governments that have bylaws in place are:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Abbotsford | 7. Richmond |
| 2. City of North Vancouver | 8. Sechelt |
| 3. Chilliwack | 9. Squamish |
| 4. Courtenay | 10. Surrey |
| 5. District of North Vancouver | 11. Vancouver |
| 6. Pitt Meadows | 12. Whistler |

REPORT IT OR FIX IT - What would you do?

Over the years, I have heard stories while attending fire-related courses or while conducting fire inspections about fire protection equipment not being inspected and tested properly. As a technician and a professional, you are responsible for the equipment you are inspecting and testing. How do you approach a situation involving improper work done on the system or unit prior to you appearing on the scene?

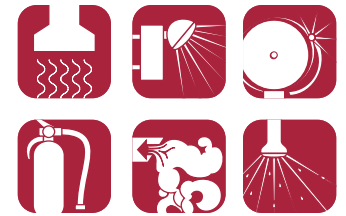
Are you working on just a piece of machinery that is regulated by the provincial and local governments and must be inspected and tested semi-annually or annually, or does it have a more intrinsic value? It does – the equipment you are working on involves life safety devices that protect people and property 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

You, the technician, are responsible for the safety of the people in the buildings you are working on. So how do you handle a situation wherein previous work has been done improperly? ASTTBC's Code of Ethics and Practice Guidelines states: *"report to the appropriate agencies any hazardous, illegal or unethical professional decisions or practices by fellow members or others ..."*. The Code of Ethics has been in place for a number of years and is the foundation for the work of ASTTBC, the FPCP, and the technician. It is where professionalism begins and how we gain respect and status within the province. People expect the best from you, and rely on you as a professional to do your work properly. Technicians certified by ASTTBC are trained to the same standards, take the same courses and must have the same amount of work experience before becoming certified. Local governments pass bylaws that regulate who can inspect and test fire protection equipment within their jurisdictions. Those individuals are ASTTBC technicians.

So I ask you, as a professional, as a technician, how you deal with situations involving fire protection equipment which has been inspected or tested incorrectly by another technician? Do you report it or fix it? Do you report it to the fire department, building owner or ASTTBC?

I know this situation does not happen often, but I would like to gather input from technicians about how they would handle similar situations. Please send responses to...

bstegavig@asttbc.org.



Magic n' Miracles Show

The Magic N' Miracles show has been presented for the last 30 years to support local charities and has become one of the largest fundraising magic shows in North America. The show brings magic, mystery, comedy and illusion to audiences, featuring Canadian Master Illusionist Murray Hatfield.

ASTTBC supported the Magic and Miracles fundraiser for the 2007 shows. 20 tickets for the January 3rd, 2008 Vancouver show and 6 tickets for the January 6th, 2008 Surrey show were given to "Child Life" at British Columbia Children's Hospital (BCCH) so children from BCCH could attend and enjoy the shows.

Fire Prevention Officer Association of British Columbia (FPOABC) Workshop – Campbell River

ASTTBC and the Fire Protection Certification Board had a booth at the FPOABC Workshop held in Campbell River from May 5th to 9th. Information about the Fire Protection Certification Program was available at the booth. Our goal was to encourage fire prevention officers to take the information back to their jurisdictions and present an Inspection and Testing for Fire Protection Equipment Bylaw to their Councils.

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2008 - 2011

The Fire Protection Certification Board has developed a Strategic Plan for the Fire Protection Certification Program. The main areas we will be concentrating on in the next few years are:

1. encourage all local governments in the Vancouver Lower Mainland to enact bylaws to regulate the inspection and testing of fire protection equipment;
2. encourage all local governments on Vancouver Island to enact bylaws to regulate the inspection and testing of fire protection equipment;
3. encourage all other local governments in British Columbia to enact bylaws for regulating the inspection and testing of fire protection equipment;
4. establish a public awareness program for the British Columbia school system about the employment opportunities in the field of inspection and testing of fire protection equipment;
5. further the educational requirements for fire protection technicians by offering seminars and publishing plain language guidelines on ethics, practice standards and duty of care, codes and standards.

Fire Protection Certification Board

Name	Representative
Stuart Affleck	Fire Protection Consultant
Robert Barrett (Vice-Chair)	Bartec Fire Safety Systems Ltd.
Rick Critchlow	Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services
Derek Dickson	North Vancouver City Fire Services
Brett Morris	Fire Prevention Officers Association of BC
John Harder	Cummins Western Canada
Dale Maranda (Chair)	D & S Chem-Spray Ltd.
Wayne McLeod	Fire Protection Consultant
Paul Morrison	BCIT
Brian Stegavig	Manager – Fire Prot. Registration
Costa Vlachias	Contec Fire & Safety Ltd.
Stephen Watt	Office of the Fire Commissioner
Marv Woolley	BCIT (Retired)

Fire Protection Certification Board Meetings

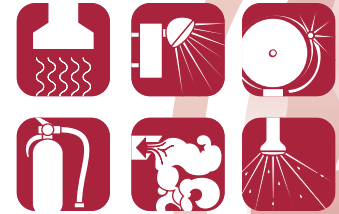
The Fire Protection Certification Board meets approximately 6 times a year. Included in discussions at the meetings are application approvals for technicians meeting the requirements for new and additional disciplines.

The remaining 2008 meeting dates are:

June 4th

September 3rd

November 26th



FM Data Sheet Access

FM Global, (Factory Mutual Insurance Co) recently announced that a new web-based application is available that permits external downloading of the Property Loss Prevention Data Sheets, free of charge at www.fmglobaldatasheets.com. The new self-service feature allows anyone with internet access to register on the site and download the data sheets. The application ensures only current information is available and creates an easier/affordable way for architects, consultants and contractors to meet the clients' requests to build to FM Global standards. FM Global will no longer produce the data sheets on CD or in hard copy. The data sheets will be available exclusively through a self-service download with registration.

Position Paper

In March of this year, the Fire Protection Certification Board issued a Position Paper for the Fire Protection Certification Program (*see attached*).