CERTIFICATES OF COMPETENCY

ADMISTRATIVE RULE 9.01.20

The intent of these provisions is to ensure that fire/life safety systems are installed, inspected, tested and maintained by individuals who have demonstrated a basic knowledge to perform such work in accordance with the International Fire Code as amended, fire department administrative rules, Washington State licensing requirements and nationally recognized standards.

These provisions shall apply to all individuals engage in installing, programming, inspecting, testing or maintaining fire/life safety systems except:

1. Members of the fire department acting in their official capacity engaged in the servicing fire department equipment, work performed on fire protection systems in connection with emergency responses, or of fire protection systems at any premises for compliance with the fire code, standard operating procedures or nationally recognized standards.
2. Federal government employees engaged in installing, testing or maintaining fire/life safety systems and equipment owned by the federal government.
3. Washington State government employees engaged in installing, testing or maintaining fire/life safety systems and equipment installed for protection of public rights of way.
4. A Washington State registered professional engineer acting solely in a professional capacity.
5. Insurance Rating Associations and building owners engaged in testing and inspecting fire/life safety systems when such inspecting and testing is not required by the fire department or nationally recognized standards.
6. Any individual who services only his or her own fire extinguisher(s) for personal use, provided such extinguisher(s) are not required by the fire department, fire department administrative rule, or nationally recognized standards.
7. Individuals testing or maintaining fire protection systems installed in dwellings regulated by the International Residential Code. These individuals should refer to Washington Administrative Code Chapter 212-80 for required certification and licensing requirements.
8. Building owners, other responsible parties or their authorized agents operating fire/life systems for the purpose of conducting emergency evacuation drills required by the fire department.
9. When performing work regulated under the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) Chapter 19.28, certified master electricians, journeyman electricians, specialty electricians or properly supervised trainees allowed to perform electrical installation work under RCW 19.28, provided:
10. When work is being performed that involves electrical work regulated under RCW 19.28 and programming or testing of fire alarm systems as required by the fire code official, the individual:
    a. Must comply with this administrative rule and be a Washington State certified electrician for the work being performed; or
    b. Must be a Washington State certified electrician who is directly supervised by an individual certified by the *fire code official* during the work

Definitions
For the purpose of this administrative rule, the following word and terms have the meanings indicated below:

Certificate of Competency. A document issued any of the following agencies: Electronic Security Association/National Training School (ESA/NTS), National Institute for Certification in Engineering Technologies (NICET), Seattle Fire Department
Fire/life safety system. Approved devices, equipment and systems or combinations of systems used to detect a fire, activate an alarm, enhance or extend emergency responder radio communications, extinguish or control a fire, control or manage smoke and products of a fire or any combination thereof.
Inspection. A visual examination of a fire protection system, or portion of the system, to verify that the system appears to be in operating condition, is free from physical damage, and complies with the fire code and applicable statutes and regulations.
Maintenance. Work required to keep fire/life safety systems operable or make repairs in accordance with the fire code and applicable statutes and regulations. The term also means the disassembly of an extinguisher, fire protection system and a complete check of all working parts and all parts, which have a bearing on the performance of the system to insure integrity.
Testing. A procedure used to determine the status of a fire protection system to verify it is operating as intended by conducting periodic checks on fire protection systems such as water flow tests, fire pump tests, shaft pressurization tests, fire alarm tests etc. The term "testing" also includes acceptance testing and reacceptance testing.

Certificate of Competency Required

No individual shall engage in installing, programming, inspection, testing or maintaining fire protection systems unless they have a valid Certificate of Occupancy or are specifically exempted.

Certificate of Competency holders shall be required to carry their certificate at all times when performing work on a fire/life safety system and equipment and to show this certificate of competency when requested to do so by a fire department representative.

Certificate of Competency holders shall also produce a valid Washington State driver's license or other form of picture identification acceptable to the *fire code official* when requested to do so by the *fire code official.*

Individuals enrolled in a fire sprinkler apprenticeship program approved by the Washington State Fire Marshal may install, program, inspect, test or maintain fire sprinkler systems and equipment, provided that such work is conducted in the presence and under the direct supervision of another employee who holds a valid certificate for the type of work being performed. The ratio of apprentices to journey-level workers may not exceed on apprentice per certified journey-level worker.

Persons working of fire protection systems while enrolled in an approved apprenticeship program shall be required to produce their apprenticeship card or other written evidence of enrollment in an approved apprenticeship program, as well as a Washington State driver's license or other form of picture identification, when required to do so by the *fire code official.*

Types of Certificates

A certificate of competency to perform work on fire/life safety systems must be obtained before an individual may perform the types of work on fire/life safety systems specified for each certificate.

Fire/life Safety System	Recognized Certificates
Inspection, testing, and maintenance of water-based fire protection systems	WSFM Level I & T SFD Type AS-ITT (S)
Installation, inspection, testing, and maintenance of foam fire extinguishing systems	SFD Type E-1 and AS-3 (S)
Installation, inspection, testing and maintenance of carbon dioxide fire extinguishing systems	SFD type E-2
Installation, inspection, testing, and maintenance of clean agent of replacement agent fire extinguishing systems	SFD type E-3
Installation, inspection, testing, and maintenance of dry/wet chemical fire extinguishing systems	SFD type E-4
Installation (non-electrical), inspection, testing and maintenance of emergency generators	SFD EG-1
Inspection, testing, maintenance, and programming of automatic fire alarm systems in any building.	NICET II, ESA/NTS or SFD FA-1
Installation (non-electrical), inspection, testing, and maintenance of fire pumps and controllers	SFD FP-1
Inspection, testing, and maintenance of fire pumps and controllers	SFD FP-ITM
All activities relating to portable fire extinguishers	SFD Type FEX-1
Installation, inspection, testing, maintenance, charging and recharging of portable fire extinguishers	SFD Type FEX-2
Hydrostatic testing of fire extinguishing cylinders	SFD Type FEX-3
Annual external examination of CO_2 or stored pressure fire extinguishers equipped with pressure indicators or gauges	SFD Type FEX-4
Installation, inspection, testing, and maintenance of smoke control systems	SFD Type SC-1
Inspection, testing, and maintenance of smoke control systems	SFD Type SC-ITM

Explanatory legend:
  ESA/NTS = Electronic Security Association/National Training School
  SFD = Seattle Fire Department
  NICET = National Institute for Certification in Engineering Technologies
  WSFM = Washington State Fire Marshal

Service Label Requirements

When performing installation, inspection, testing, programming, or maintenance, the name of the certifying firm, firm address, firm phone number, date of work, signature and certificate of competency number of the technician performing the work shall be placed on the service tag or label. The service tag or label will be of the appropriate color; white, yellow or red as appropriate to identify the system status.

> **White Tag – No Deficiencies**
> Systems with no deficiencies shall be tagged with a white service tag or label. If the system has any deficiencies listed on the test report, then it cannot be certified as a white tag.
>
> **Yellow Tag – System Has Deficiencies**
> Systems that are functioning, but have deficiencies, shall be tagged with a yellow service tag.
>
> **Red Tag – Impaired System/System Out of Service**
> Fire protection system(s) that are impaired for any length of time shall be tagged with a red impairment tag.

Fire Protection System Type	Location of White & Yellow System Tags	Location of Red Impairment Tags
Extinguishing Systems other than sprinkler systems (Carbon Dioxide, clean agent, dry chemical)	On the agent supply tank or pull device	Same as white/yellow
Automatic Sprinkler System	On or adjacent to the sprinkler control valve	Same as White/Yellow, and at each Fire Department Connection (FDC)
Emergency Alarm Systems (Haz Mat)	In a readily viewable location	Same as white/yellow
Emergency Responder Radio System	Fire Alarm Control Panel	Same as white/yellow
Emergency Generators required by Fire/Building Code	At the generator and/or FCC	Same as white/yellow
Fire Alarm Systems	Fire Alarm Control Panel	Same as white/yellow and at FCC if FCC exists
Fire Pumps	On the pump controller	Same as white/yellow and at FCC if FCC exists
Rangehoods	Control valve of extinguisher or cylinder	Same as white/yellow
Smoke Control System	On the smoke control panel	Same as white/yellow and FCC if FCC exists
Standpipe Systems	On or adjacent to the lowest outlet	Same as white/yellow and at each FDC