



August 11, 2023 (updated 10/01/2023 for code adoption delay in Washington State)

RE: UPDATE FOR SYSTEMS TESTING COMPANIES AND TECHNICIANS REGARDING THE 2021 FIRE CODE AND REGIONAL WORK

Dear Systems Testing Company/Technician,

The Seattle Fire Department (SFD) anticipates that the 2021 Seattle Fire Code will take effect in March 2024. This timeline has been delayed at the State level from the original 2023 target. The Fire Code is one of the Construction Codes. All of the Construction Codes in Washington are experiencing the same delay. This letter provides information about the most relevant changes for your industries that will occur with the transition to the 2021 Fire Code, to provide you time to update your own forms for the new code.

TCE forms for the 2021 Fire Code will be available in TCE on the date the Washington Codes take effect, expected no sooner than March 2024. Before the new code takes effect, Seattle permit applicants wishing to use the 2021 code instead of the 2018 code may use a code alternate request.

1. Changes to Forms in www.thecomplianceengine.com (TCE)

SFD Forms The transition to the 2021 fire code requires a small number of updates to several TCE forms for reporting annual tests and acceptance tests. Please see our enclosed Information Sheet and its Attachment 1 for a full list of changes. The Proposed 2021 Fire Code forms are also on our website: www.seattle.gov/fire/business-services/systems-testing#systemstestingforms

Regionally-Standard Forms SFD is a participating jurisdiction using the standardized regional forms for fire alarm, sprinkler, hood suppression, and DAS. The regional forms are also being updated. All participating jurisdictions will be deploying the same changes. The regional form changes are also included in Attachment 1 to the enclosed Information Sheet. The list of participating departments is enclosed. Standardization was achieved by collaboration between Fire Marshals and representatives from testing companies in the late 2010s, who shared a goal of improving systems testing practices and TCE forms. We hope that the regional forms have made your work more efficient. Thank you to all who participated.

2. 2023 Emphasis – Timely Submittal of Reports and Hanging of White Tags

The Fire Marshal would like to ask testing companies to ensure that white tags are posted at the system when repairs are completed. Since the pandemic, our inspectors are finding systems that show as repaired in TCE that have yellow tags at the building. SFD inspectors must spend additional inspection and enforcement hours on systems that may be compliant. Our enforcement also creates concerns among your customers when they hear from us.

The City will resume issuing citations to testing companies for late submittal of reports starting October 2023 for reports submitted during Q3. The fire code requires white- and yellow-tagged reports to be submitted to SFD using The Compliance Engine within 7 days, and red-tagged systems [must be reported immediately](#). A citation of \$373 per late report was introduced in January of 2020. The Fire Marshal declined to issue citations during the pandemic and initial recovery years. Once citations resume later this year, we will provide a transition period during which a maximum of one citation per company will be

written, as opposed to one citation for every late report. Please take steps now to ensure your team consistently meets timelines to enter reports into TCE.

3. State Certification Requirements for Alternative Suppression Systems

The Washington State Building Code Council introduced modified qualification requirements for personnel working on alternative suppression systems (2021 Fire Code Section 904.1.1). In the 2018 code, ICC/NAFED was required for personnel working on pre-engineered kitchen fire extinguishing systems and other alternative suppression systems. Under the 2021 code, a NICET Level II or higher in Special Hazards Suppression Systems will be required for alternative suppression systems covered under Seattle's E-1, E-2, and E-3 certifications. ICC/NAFED will continue to be acceptable for pre-engineered kitchen fire extinguishing systems. The SBCC created an effective date of **July 2024** to provide a several month transition period for technicians to obtain certifications needed. The State's insert pages are a good source of reference for these changes (see page 99). www.sbcc.wa.gov/state-codes-regulations-guidelines/state-building-code/fire-code-amendments

4. State Certification Requirements for Smoke Control and Dampers

Technicians seeking to obtain or renew SFD's Smoke Control certification are required to comply with RCW 19.27.720.1(b) for SC and SC-ITM cards issued on or after July 1, 2023. Documentation includes certificates from the ICB or other ANSI ISO/IEC 17024 accredited organization. This change was made at the State level, not by Seattle, and we sent written notification to technicians holding our SC certification on this subject earlier this year to help inform them of the change. If you are impacted by these changes, we encourage you, your employer, and your union, if any, to notify your State representatives and share your concerns.

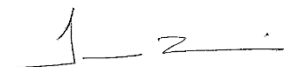
5. Regional Work: Invitation to Join Us

The regional fire marshals are meeting with stakeholders currently on **range hood installation, maintenance, and certification** requirements, including qualifications to install and maintain UL300 listed systems. If you would like to be involved, please contact Fire Marshal Todd Short from the Redmond Fire Department at TSHORT@redmond.gov.

In November, we will also begin long-discussed work to create regional forms for **smoke control acceptance testing and annual testing**. If you have not already expressed interest, please contact karen.grove@seattle.gov.

We are grateful to our systems testing companies and technicians for their ongoing contributions to fire prevention and fire safety. If you have questions, you can reach us by email at SFD_FMO_certifications@seattle.gov or SFD_FMO_systemstesting@seattle.gov.

Respectfully,



Assistant Chief Timothy J. Munnis
Fire Marshal

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Enclosure: Info Sheet "Systems Testing Form Updates for the 2021 Fire Code"

Enclosure: Regional Systems Testing - Participating Jurisdictions as of 6/2023