

Fire and Life Safety Inspection Program

Prepared for the Clark County
Council

March 9, 2016

Purpose of the Fire Code

- As adopted by Washington State:
 - The purpose of this code is to establish the minimum requirements consistent with nationally recognized good practice for providing a reasonable level of life safety and property protection from the hazards of fire, explosion, or dangerous conditions in new and existing buildings, structures, and premises and to provide safety to fire fighters and emergency responders during emergency operations.

State / County Laws

- RCW 19.27 requires counties and cities to enforce the International Fire Code as part of the State's adoption of the codes that make up the overall State Building Code
- State law does **NOT** outline any specifics as to how this enforcement is to be carried out

State / County Laws

- Both the state law and the body of the Fire Code require Operational Permits to be issued for 46 processes outlined therein
- However, neither stipulates how often these permits are to be issued nor outlines the process to follow for their issuance

State / County Laws

- Clark County Code 15.12
 - Adopts the IFC locally
 - Outlines the requirements of our current inspection program to include:
 - Issuance of operational permits annually via inspections
 - Includes transient lodging, common areas in apartments, and vulnerable populations
 - Fees to be paid by business on hourly rate to include associated driving, computer, etc.

Clark County's Current Program

- Inspects approximately 800 occupancies each year
 - Approximately 15 million square feet inspected annually (county only)
- Estimated to be only 25% of businesses in county
- Remaining businesses do not ever receive fire and life safety inspection
- Why is this program important?

Examples



Examples



Examples



Examples



What Other Counties are Doing

■ Pierce County

- High life hazard businesses inspected annually; all other businesses inspected on 18-month cycle
- Fees support approximately 10%

■ Snohomish County

- All businesses inspected annually
- Flat fee table based on type and size
- Combination GF and fees

What Other Counties are Doing

■ Yakima County

- All business inspected annually
- Flat fee table based on type and size
- Fees fully support the program

■ Thurston County

- All businesses inspected annually
- Flat fee table based on type and size
- Fees fully support the program

What Other Counties are Doing

- Partial inspection program:
 - Clallam County
 - Grant County
 - Mason County
 - Kitsap County
- No regular inspections:
 - Douglas County
 - Franklin County
 - Grays Harbor County

Clark County's Current Program

- \$350,000 per year to fund these inspections
 - 2 full-time Fire Inspectors and overhead costs
 - Currently, fees pay about 40%
 - \$130/hr – creates incentive for businesses to be prepared for inspections
 - General Fund has been picking up 60%
 - Fee amounts have been altered several times over the years
 - Most heard complaint about inspections is related to fees

Washington Survey and Rating Bureau

- Fire Departments are rated on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 indicates exemplary fire protection capabilities and 10 indicates capabilities are insufficient for insurance rating credit
- The rating of the fire department is a tool used by insurance companies to determine insurance rates

Washington Survey and Rating Bureau

■ Class 1	0 – 500
■ Class 2	501 – 1000
■ Class 3	1001 – 1500
■ Class 4	1501 – 2000
■ Class 5	2001 – 2500
■ Class 6	2501 – 3000
■ Class 7	3001 – 3500
■ Class 8	3501 – 4000
■ Class 9	4001 – 4500
■ Class 10	4501 - 5000

Washington Survey & Rating Bureau

- Fire departments are scored in 4 areas:

• Water Supply	1950 points
• Fire Department	1950 points
• Fire Service Comm.	450 points
• Fire Safety Control	650 points
• Total Demerits possible	5000 points

Washington Survey & Rating Bureau

WSRB - Summary of Demerits / Fire Safety Control					
Areas Examined	Total Possible Demerit Points	Latest WSRB Scoring	% of Credit	Proposed Insp Program	% of Credit per WSRB
Fire Code Enforcement					
Fire Marshal	20	10	50%	0	
Fire Plan Review	50	11	78%	11	
Inspections of Fire Code Permits	50	0	100%	0	
Fire Code Inspections of Existing Occ	400	352	12%	244	61%
Confidence Testing of Fire Prot Systems	20	18	10%	18	
Total For Section	540	391	28%	273	49.5%
Public Fire Education					
School Programs	35	19	46%	19	
Adult Programs	15	6	60%	6	
Total for Section	50	25	50%	25	
Fire Investigations	20	0	100%	0	
Building Code Enforcement	40	4	90%	4	
Total Points	650	420	35.4%	302	53.6%

Washington Survey & Rating Bureau

FREQUENCY OF INSPECTION	NON-CERTIFIED INSPECTOR	NON-CERTIFIED +5 YEARS EXP	CERTIFIED FIRE INSPECTOR
No Inspections	100%	100%	100%
One Inspection @ 3 Years	80	75	70
One Inspection @ 2 Years	70	65	60
One Inspection @ 2 Years & Annual H Occ	60	55	50
Annual Inspection	50	45	40
Annual Inspection + H Occ Semi-Annual	40	35	30
Annual Inspection + H Occ Quarterly	30	25	20
Semi-Annual Inspection	20	15	10
Semi-Annual Inspection + H Occ Quarterly	10	5	0
Semi-Annual Inspection + H Occ Bimonthly	5	0	0

Note 1. This matrix is a guideline only. Engineering judgement may influence the given percentages based on enforcement.

Note 2. A certified fire inspector is an individual who has passed the Uniform Fire Code certification test. The inspector should remain proficient with outside classes and follow-up UFC examinations.

Note 3. H Occ are hazardous occupancies as defined in the Uniform Fire Code.

Note 4. In order to receive full credit for any fire inspection program, a five-year experience record is required. Programs of less than 5 years will be prorated accordingly.

Proposal for New Program

- Inspect all businesses on a 1, 2, or 3-year interval based on risk and public exposure
- For off-years:
 - Review fire system inspection, testing, and maintenance records
- Refer to the spreadsheets created with BOCC input

Proposal for New Program

- Request that the inspection program no longer charge fees to the businesses
 - Constant and most heard source of irritation
 - Would build goodwill with business owners
 - Promote public safety as opposed to just being fee-driven

Occupancy Classification (Business Types as Defined by International Building Code)		Risk Level		
		Low (3 yrs)	Moderate (2 yrs)	High (Annual)
A	Places of public assembly, Division 1 Concert halls, theaters, with fixed seating		X	
	Places of public assembly, Division 2 Banquet halls, nightclubs, restaurants, taverns, bars			X
A	Places of public assembly, Division 3 Arcades, art galleries, bowling alleys, community halls, courtrooms, dance halls (no food or drink), exhibition halls, gymnasiums, tennis courts, swimming pools (no spectator seating), lecture halls, libraries, museums, churches, pool and billiard parlors			X
	Places of public assembly, Division 4 Arenas, skating rinks, tennis courts, swimming pools with spectator seating		X	
A	Places of public assembly, Division 5 Amusement park structures, bleachers, grandstands, stadiums	X		
B	Businesses Includes office, professional or service-type transactions such as ambulatory health care, banks, civic administration, colleges	No Op Permits	Mod Haz Op Permit	High Haz Op Permit
	Educational Kindergarten through 12th grade facilities, daycares		X	
F	Factory Industrial Manufacturing occupancies	No Op Permits	Mod Haz Op Permit	High Haz Op Permit
	H High-hazard occupancies Buildings and structures containing materials that pose detonation, deflagration, readily support combustion, physical, and health hazards, and semiconductor fabrication facilities using HPM			X
I	Institutional occupancies Buildings in which people are cared for or live in a supervised environment having physical / mental limitations, correctional facilities, where occupants are incapable of self-preservation			X
M	Mercantile occupancies Buildings for the display and sale of merchandise, includes department stores, drug stores, markets, motor-fuel dispensing facilities, retail or wholesale stores	No Op Permits	Mod Haz Op Permit	High Haz Op Permit
	R Residential, Division 1 Buildings used for sleeping units (transient accommodations) including hotels and motels		X sprinkler protected	X without fire sprinklers
R	Residential, Division 2 Containing more than two dwelling units for primarily permanent occupants including apartments, dormitories, fraternities, nontransient hotels and motels			
S	Storage occupancies Buildings occupied for storage uses of highly combustible materials and motor vehicle repair facilities	No Op Permits	Mod Haz Op Permit	High Haz Op Permit

ADDITIONALLY:

Look at fire system inspection, testing, and maintenance records for years without inspections.
Where external agency inspections are shown to be equivalent and ongoing, consider them in lieu of FMO inspections
Self-inspection program or fire / life safety information sent to businesses in off years (preferably on-line)

Revised 8/27/12

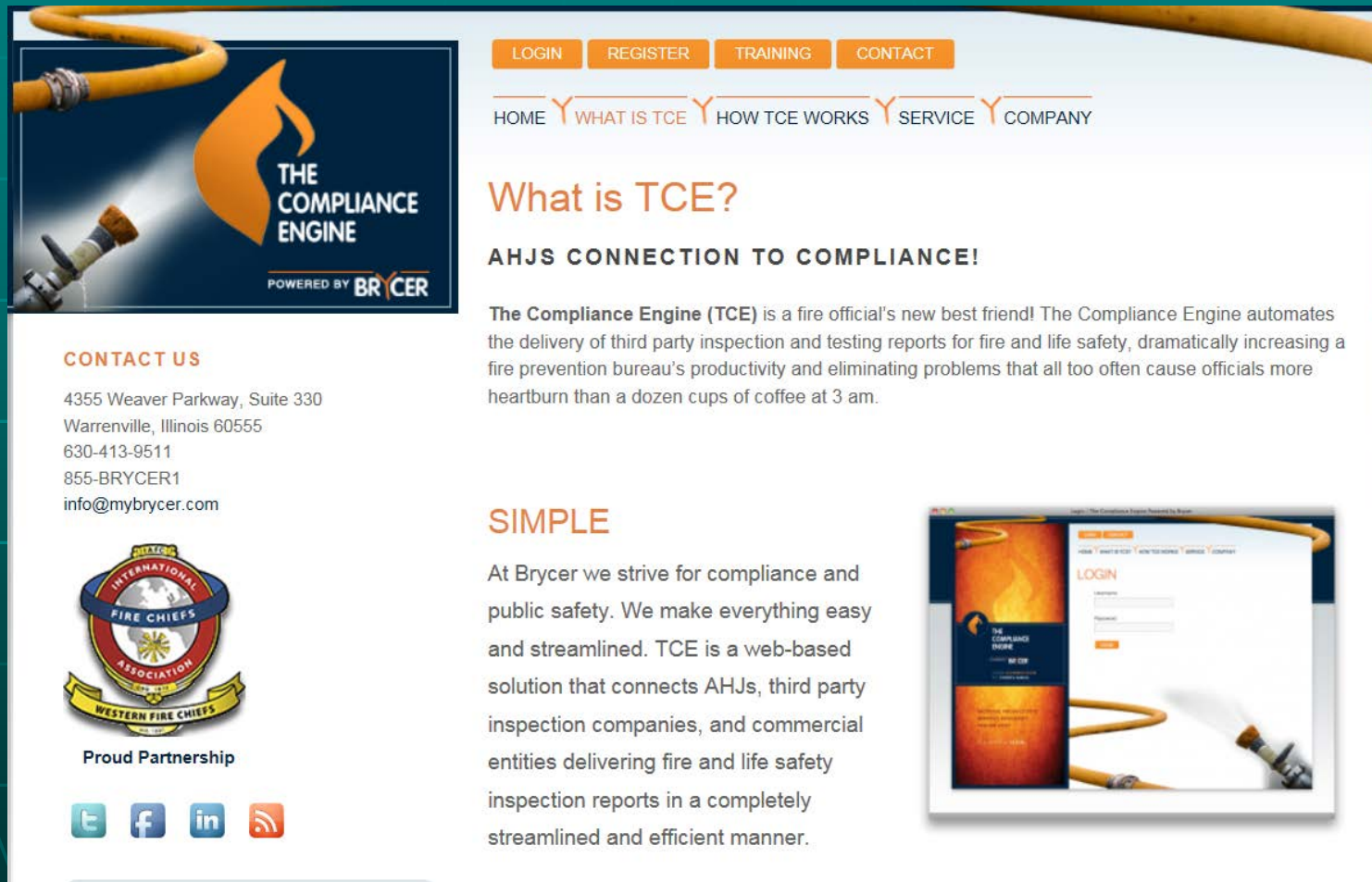
Type of Operational Permit	Hazard Level		
	Low (3 yrs or as needed)	Moderate (2 yrs)	High Annual
Aerosol products			X
Amusement buildings	X		
Aviation facilities			X
Carnivals and fairs	X		
Cellulose Nitrate Film	X		
Combustible dust producing			X
Combustible fibers		X	
Compressed gases			X
Covered Mall Buildings		X	
Cytogenic fluids		X	
Cutting and welding			X
Dry cleaning plants		X	
Exhibits and trade shows	X		
Explosives	X		
Fire hydrants and valves	X		
Flammable and combustible liquids			X
Floor finishing	X		
Fruit and crop ripening	X		
Fumigation and thermal insecticidal fogging	X		
Hazardous materials			X
Hazardous production materials			X
High-piled storage		X	
Hot work operations		X	
Industrial ovens		X	
Woodworking			X
Liquid or gas-fueled vehicles in public assembly buildings	X		
Liquefied Petroleum Gas (propane)			X
Magnesium (melt, cast, heat treat, or grind)	X		
Miscellaneous combustible storage	X		
Motor fuel dispensing			X
Open burning	X		
Open flames and torches	X		
Open flames and candles	X		
Organic coatings			
Places of public assembly	See Attached For Group A Inspections		
Private fire hydrants	X		
Pyrotechnic special effects	X		
Pyroxylin plastics		X	
Refrigeration equipment	X		
Repair garages			X
Roofing helparts	X		
Spraying or dipping operations			X
Storage of tires and tire byproducts		X	
Tents, canopies, membrane structures	X		
Tire-rebuilding plants		X	
Waste handling		X	
Wood products		X	

Inspection Frequencies based on Risk Factors

Proposal for New Program

- 2 Additional Fire Inspectors for \$360,000 (vehicles, overhead)
- Preference for full GF support of program - \$700,000 annually
- Implement 3rd party verification program for efficiencies related to fire protection system maintenance (at no cost to county)

Proposal for New Program



The screenshot displays the homepage of 'The Compliance Engine' website. At the top, there are navigation buttons for LOGIN, REGISTER, TRAINING, and CONTACT. Below these are links for HOME, WHAT IS TCE, HOW TCE WORKS, SERVICE, and COMPANY. The main heading is 'What is TCE?' followed by the sub-heading 'AHJS CONNECTION TO COMPLIANCE!'. A paragraph describes the program as a fire official's best friend that automates report delivery. A 'SIMPLE' section highlights the ease of use. On the left, there is a 'CONTACT US' section with address, phone, and email information, along with logos for the International Fire Chiefs Association and Western Fire Chiefs, and social media icons for Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and RSS. A smaller version of the website's login page is shown in a separate window on the right.

LOGIN **REGISTER** **TRAINING** **CONTACT**

[HOME](#) [WHAT IS TCE](#) [HOW TCE WORKS](#) [SERVICE](#) [COMPANY](#)

What is TCE?

AHJS CONNECTION TO COMPLIANCE!

The Compliance Engine (TCE) is a fire official's new best friend! The Compliance Engine automates the delivery of third party inspection and testing reports for fire and life safety, dramatically increasing a fire prevention bureau's productivity and eliminating problems that all too often cause officials more heartburn than a dozen cups of coffee at 3 am.

SIMPLE

At Brycer we strive for compliance and public safety. We make everything easy and streamlined. TCE is a web-based solution that connects AHJs, third party inspection companies, and commercial entities delivering fire and life safety inspection reports in a completely streamlined and efficient manner.

CONTACT US

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