AMA Regional Building / Fire Safety Codes Officer Meeting

Calgary and Surrounding Area

Tuesday, October 20, 2015

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Port-O-Call Best Western – 1935 McKnight Blvd NE – McKnight Room

Co-Facilitators:
Charles Maximillian, Field Building Inspector, AMA
Stephanie Martin, Field Building Inspector, A
Trevor Brice, Chief Fire Administrator, AMA

Representatives:
James Orr, Chief Building Administrator, AMA
Judy Parker, Certification Coordinator, Safety Codes Council
Tom Harnos, Office of the Fire Commissioner, AMA

1: Stephanie Martin called meeting to order. Introduction of participants include Calgary Fire Department, City of Calgary, City of Airdrie, IJD Inspections, Town of Okotokes, ASET, Town of Cochrane, City of Chestermere, Town of Banff, Strathmore Fire, Davis Inspections, Drumheller Fire, Rockyview Fire, and Airdrie Fire.

2: Ron Foxcroft, President / Owner, Fire Safety Services (Calgary) Ltd. - Counterfeit Paint Spray Booths

- There are counterfeit spray paint booths found with fake SCA labels. Some purchasers are not aware for this.
- Codes & standards have to be met to ensure safety in using the machine.
- This is a safety issue as these units are not properly inspected under safety regulations. As an example, the lights of the units are not in compliance with NFPA 33.
- There is a listing of counterfeit spray booths on the Intertek website.
- Paint booth applications in Alberta require stamped drawings from a licensed Alberta engineer as per the Alberta Fire Code (AFC) & Alberta Building Code (ABC).
- Note that Canadian installations differ from American.
- Note that there will not be a Standata for this.
- For more information contact Ron Foxcroft of Fire Safety Services (Calgary) Ltd. at www.firesafetyservices.ca or visit Alberta Safety Association at www.albertafire.com.
3: James Orr, Chief Building Administrator, AMA

UPDATE

i) Relevant changes to the Safety Codes Act (SCA)

   a. Amendments – Timely Coded Option
      • Codes will be adopted the same day as the update for the National 210 and enforced 12 months later.
      • The Building and Fire National Codes will be adopted in 2021.
      • Note that the Minister has the ability to bring in the codes earlier or later.

   b. Alberta Safety Codes Authority (ASCA)
      • Safety Codes Council (SCC) will be administering non-accredited authorities. Judy Parker will provide an update in January 2016.
      • Implementation of the ASCA program is scheduled for January 1, 2016.

   c. Administrative Penalties
      • Early next year, administrative enforcement penalties will come into place.
      • Officers will be able to issue ticket. ie. Max load for a building.
      • Considered as or will be a Ministerial Order.
      • This will be a means to deal with offenders on a quicker basis.
      • These penalties were created as an educational component. To send a message out to offenders.
      • Offenders will be posted on website.

   d. Provincial Safety Code Officer
      • Provincial SCO’s are now granted AHJ authority for all of Alberta.
      • Safety Code Officers (SCO’s) are able help the accredited areas as per Safety Codes Act (SCA 33(1)) for Problem Administration without the need for special Ministerial approval ie.) Slave lake fires and High River flood.
      • This does not include Federal Airport Reserves.
      • The appeal process can be appealed depending on the size of the penalty and it will go to the Municipal Government board.
      • An offenders list will be generated and it will include the name of business and address. The list can only be issued by Municipal Affairs. Note: Even if appealed, the offender will still be listed.

ii) Harmonized Code Project

   • A committee has been created for this project and James is the chair.
   • The committee will be connecting with Municipalities.
   • The focus is to combine the National and Provincial codes (Building and Fire).
iii) Implementation of the National Energy Code of Canada for Buildings
   - Energy code will come into place on November 1, 2015.
   - Updates will be displayed on the Government of Alberta website.

iv) Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD)
   - See letter from the Minister included with the Meeting Agenda.
   - An extensive consultation regarding PDD Regulation and explore appropriate measures for the safety of person with developmental disabilities will be launched shortly.
   - Inspection program for the homes under the PDD Regulation will not proceed until after a consultation is completed.
   - An exemption under the Safety Codes Act for PDD residences will be created. This will be in effect until March 31, 2016.
   - The exemption will treat all residences which fall under the PDD Regulation as "residential occupancies".
   - This pause has been included in the Standata.
   - Any Safety Regulations for abuse can be directed to the Safety Codes Council.
   - If an issue is life threatening, definitely enforce it.
   - When fraud is involved, notify Municipal Affairs.
   - List of buildings and sites will be located on the Calgary, Edmonton, and Lethbridge website.

v) Standata development review
   - The latest versions should be available this coming December or January.
   - They are currently under review to ensure accuracy
   - In the meantime, the current version can be used – check with Municipal Affairs to confirm

4: Judy Parker, Certification Coordinator, Safety Codes Council
   i) Certification and Training
      - 2014 ABC & AFC Code Update Training
         o Update training is mandatory for Building Safety Codes Officers (BSCO’s).
         o Deadline to complete update training is July 1, 2016.
         o No mandatory update training is required for Fire Safety Codes Officers (FSCO’s).
      - Certification and Training Structure (Building and Fire)
         o BSCO’s Program – Information booklets were sent to all BSCO’s and accredited organizations in spring of 2014.
o FSCO’s Program
  - Additional consultation will be conducted later in 2015 and early 2016.
  - Will be implemented in September 2016.

- Professional Development (for SCO’s)
  o Will be implemented in 2017-18 once the ability to track points online is developed.
  o One is able to collect 30 points over three years.
  o It will be mandatory beginning in 2018. In 2017, participation will be voluntary

ii) Alberta Safety Codes Authority (ASCA)
  - Begins operations on January 1, 2016
  - Goals are to improve service delivery, consistency, and sustainability.
  - Brings the un-accredited sector into oversight by the Council.
  - Website will be up in in mid-November of this year. askasca@safetycodes.ab.ca

Update: Implementation of ASCA has been delayed pending final legislative approval (Ministerial Order) being issued. A revised operation start date will be released shortly.

iii) QMP Review
  - Review of Quality Management Plans for accredited organizations will continue into 2016.
  - Aiming to complete by the end of 2016.

iv) Safe Temporary Propane Heat Program
  - Program was designed to help educate and ensure propane heat setups on construction sites are done properly.
  - Ask for “quick reference cards” and information package at communication@safetycodes.ab.ca.

v) Student Awards Program
  - Annual program created to attract qualified applicants to become SCO’s.
  - Application deadlines are October and April each year.
  - Awards are $1000 each.

vi) Systems and Fire Equipment (SAFE) Registry
  - Online listing of individuals qualified in commercial kitchen exhaust cleaning, portable fire extinguishers and fixed fire suppression systems.
  - There will be an annual renewal.
  - Some companies may wish to use this as a marketing tool.
  - Site has been developed but is not online yet.

vii) Certification & Accreditation Awards
- Council awards recognize outstanding contributions of: a Council volunteer member; an accredited organization; and an SCO.
- Nominations open in January 2016. Awards are given out at the Council conference in June.

5: Joint meeting with Building and Fire

- **Eddy La Rocque, Senior Fire Protection Engineer, City of Calgary**
  2014 ABC 3.2.4.6 & 9.10.1.2. Commissioning of Life Safety and Fire Protection Systems
  2014 AFC 2.1.3.8. Commissioning of Life Safety and Fire Protection Systems
  - There are new code requirements for commissioning Life Safety & Fire Protection Systems.
  - This can be found in the 2014 ABC & AFC.
  - It is a code requirement – applies to fire protection and life safety systems only
  - There is no reference in the standard.
  - Updates to the 2017 ABC & AFC are expected.

- Town of Banff
  - Joint sign off implemented of fire and building for permits.
  - For now, this is a pilot project.
  - Municipal Affairs would like to hear more on the pilot project, if okay.

6: Joint meeting – Building Session

**Radon Gas**
- If the intent of the 2014 ABC is to gather gases from the center of the space, it does not seem that a perforated pipe would meet the intent. However, if the end of a non-perforated pipe becomes blocked, there is no way to extract the gases from under the slab.

  **Question:** Why must the pipe be located at the center of the floor? **Answer:** To Follow

  **Question:** Can the pipe be perforated? **Answer:** To Follow.

  AMA will look at writing up an information bulletin, or some type of communication piece to provide additional clarification on Radon Gas Mitigation Installations.

**Secondary Suites**
- Approvals for secondary suites always start with Development Permit approvals.
- Changes for secondary suite developments have included requirements for exterior unprotected openings under 9.9.4.5. and 9.9.4.4. The NRC commented confirming that these requirements as stated in the ABC are applicable to secondary suite developments because of the level of safety for fire protection.
NAFS CSA-A440S1 Standard for Windows, Doors and Skylight Installations

- Question Posed: When and how are municipalities checking for compliance to this standard? Answer: SCO’s are looking for confirmation of the labelling on each window.
- The CSA-A440.4 installation standard must be reviewed by SCO’s.
- There needs to be a way to provide SCO’s with training on the standards, or provide a summary of the requirements set out in the standard so that SCO’s have been given the information they need to complete inspections.

Photoilluminescent Exit Signs

- The question has been raised for photoilluminescent signs, on whether they require the charging light to be connected to emergency power supply.
- There are specific lighting/charging requirements within the CAN/ULC-S527 standard for photoilluminescent exit signs ie color of light, timeframe for charging etc. which should ensure the sign is properly illuminated in emergency situations.
- ABC under 3.4.5.(5) requires that the circuitry serving lighting for externally illuminated exit signs to serve no other equipment, and to be connected to emergency power supply.
- The CBA confirmed he would look into the request for clarification. He would also talk with Fire, and Electrical as the concern overlaps into other disciplines.

Exit Signage

- The installation of the new “running man exit signage” will require some additional clarification in renovation situations. Ie. small area in large buildings, or a renovation to a single floor area in a multistory building.
- A Province wide Bulletin is needed to provide clarification on this; however a common sense approach would seem appropriate.

Manual Pull Stations

- The ABC requirements specify that manual stations (new wording) are required at all exits.
- This has created issues for buildings of more than 3 stories, where the principal entrances for the lower suites in the residential units provide access directly to the exterior. Do these secondary exit doors now require manual stations? Answer: Yes, a principle entrance door would require a manual station in this situation.

Egress Bedroom Windows

- The clearances required around an egress bedroom window have been changed in the 2014 ABC, to 760mm.
- Question Posed: When the window is located below an upper penetration like a deck, what clearances are other SCO’s asking for? Answer: The Appendix notes that an escape path must not go through nor open onto another room, floor or space.
- Calgary has asked for a minimum of 2.1m clearance under a deck, while other jurisdictions have asked for the minimum clearance ie 550mm or now 760mm.
- Be aware that where awning windows are installed, the clearance requirements of 760mm plus the height of the window may end up extending out past the typical 1.2m side yard dimension.
Thermal Barriers

- The ABC requires that thermal barriers meet the CAN/ULC-S124 standard; however the Appendix notes indicate that testing which does not exceed 140 degrees after a period of 10 minutes under the CAN/ULC-S101 standard may also be accepted.
- Testing can be specific to the type of material used.
- Calgary noted that there has been some testing under the CAN/ULC-S101, for intumescent paints where the thermal couples have been placed in the wrong location. The thermal couples should be placed between the Thermal barrier and the foam itself. There has been testing completed where the thermal couples were placed in the foam. Acceptance of any intumescent paint as a thermal barrier should be reviewed for this.

Smoke Alarms

- The 2014 ABC requires that smoke alarms in dwelling units be placed within each bedroom and within the hallway to the bedrooms, if one exists.
- If there is no hallway, then at the top of the stairs seems appropriate.
- CAN/CSA-S531 and CAN/ULC-S553 standards have been referenced for smoke alarms and installations.
- Smoke alarms are required to be labelled.
- “NEST” installations required the red wire to be capped off, which would not make it “wired” as is required by the ABC.
- “NEST” systems are not compatible with other “NEST” systems.
- There is a new requirement for a silencing button for smoke alarms. The silencing button should silence the alarm for a maximum of 10 minutes. If the problem exists after 10 minutes, the alarm will sound again.

Smoke Alarms / Carbon Monoxide Alarms

- Carbon monoxide alarms now require interconnection in secondary suites.
- AMA will be coming out with a new STANDATA for situations where new secondary suites are developed with separate utilities. These situations have concerns with meeting both the ABC and the National Electrical Code.

Concrete Manufacturers

- Question was posed to the group, are SCO’s asking concrete manufacturers to be certified to the A23 standard which is referenced in the 2014 ABC. The response was no from all parties.
- Alberta has the Canadian Prestressed Concrete Institute (CPCI) which provides third party compliance audits, however should we be asking for A23 certification.
- Calgary to follow-up on this and provide an update.

Tiny Houses

- These new items may be coming into Alberta.
- AMA is currently not aware of any "Tiny Houses” meeting any CSA standards for construction.
• It is the opinion of SCO’s, that if the structure operates as a building, with the intention of being permanently resided in, then it is a building and must meet the requirements as set out within the ABC.

Food Trucks
• SCO’s cannot enforce the ABC on food trucks.
• AMA has been asked to look at these, to determine if a set of standards can be developed. We are in discussions with NFPA, to review this.
• AMA will provide further information on this at a later date.

STANDATA for sidewall Vent Terminations
• A new joint Gas and Building Standata has been drafted specifically addressing the venting of appliances through a side wall. The standata addressed the venting clearances required under the B149.1 Natural Gas and Propane Installation Code and the discrepancies between it and the 2014 ABC.
• The 900 mm clearance requirements to “air intakes” under the 2014 ABC does not apply to window and doors.

Registered Engineering Professional vs Professional Technologist
• A Registered Professional is regulated solely by APEGA.
• A Professional Technologist (P.Tech) is a new designation within the last three years.
• A P. Tech is regulated jointly by APEGA and ASET, and can stamp his/her own work, however it is only within a specific scope of work.
• There are roughly 500 P. Tech’s in Alberta.

7: Joint meeting – Fire Session

Pat Purnell, FE Program Manager for Intertek: Fire Extinguishers (FE) Labelling and Listing - Information
• Fire Extinguisher (FE) Program – to create awareness and educate authorities.
• Consumers, public, SCO’s must ensure fire extinguishers are in compliance and must have a label with a certificate number and WHI marker/logo
• UL is American. Labels should be in compliance with Canada →ULC.
• UL and ULC are not harmonized only the rating is.
• Even though you are a ULC company and are certified you can recertify an American product.
• Contact Pay for questions or concerns at 403-877-0586 or via email at patrick.purnell@intertek.com.
• There should be a 6 year testing requirement put into place. Within those 6 years, FE’s that are not in compliance should be replaced.

Tom Harnos, Field Officer, OFC – 2014 Alberta Fire Code Changes – Information/Update
• From 2006 – 2014 there have been changes to the Alberta Fire Code.
• If reference code does not line up please contact Municipal Affairs and ask for either Tina Parker or Tom Harnos.

• Note that changes are also in the Appendix and References sections.

• Note that reported accidents are $250.