AMA Regional Building / Fire Safety Codes Officer Meeting
Grande Prairie and Surrounding Area
Friday, October 23, 2015
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Pomeroy Hotel – 11633 100 Street – Salon B

Co-Facilitators: Joe Healy, Field Building Inspector, AMA
Geoff Brownlie, Field Building Inspector, AMA
Trevor Brice, Chief Fire Administrator, AMA

Representatives: Tom Harnos, Office of the Fire Commissioner, AMA
Michelle Plaizier, Administrator of Accreditation, Safety Codes Council

1: Joe Healy called meeting to order. Introduction of participants include City of Grande Prairie, County of Grande Prairie, Superior Safety Codes, Spirit River, High Prairie Fire, Grande Cache Fire, and Saddle Hills County.

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

Discussion

- Consumers are purchasing counterfeit Spray Paint Booths and are being sold at a lower cost. Some are not aware of this.
- This is a safety issue as these units are not properly inspected under safety regulations. As an example, the lights on the units are not in compliance with NFPA 33.
- Manufacturers of the counterfeit booths have also placed fake CSA Labels and Trademarks on the units.
- Paint booth applications in Alberta require stamped drawings from a licensed Alberta Engineer. This is in accordance with Alberta Fire Code (AFC) & Alberta Building Code (ABC). Unfortunately, engineer stamps are being sold in the black market and anyone can purchase them.
- Booths are only listed ETL, Warnock Hershey, and Intertek. These plans should include their label and an engineer's stamp.
- Labels should provide a master contract number.
- New catalytic Heaters which reach heats upwards of 2000 degrees, and can cure paint in 8-20 minutes are not available. These are Class 1 Div 2 Heaters which are installed in Class 1 Div 1 booths which must have interlocks between the spraying and the heating operations.
- It is important to ensure that down-draft booths are kept clean. There are companies in Calgary which specifically do this.
• NFPA 33 should be the baseline document used even though it is no longer referenced within the 2014 ABC, and only in the 2014 AFC.

Action
• We need to spread awareness and ensure Spray Paint Booths are inspected properly.
• There is a listing of counterfeit spray booths on the Intertek website.
• 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: Trevor Brice, Chief Fire Administrator, AMA
UPDATE
i) Relevant changes to the Safety Codes Act
   a. Amendments
      o Timely Coded Option
         • Codes will be adopted the same day as the update for the National 2015 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)
      o Safety Codes Council (SCC) will be administering permits to non-accredited authorities.
      o Implementation of the ASCA program is scheduled for January 1, 2016.
   c. Administrative Penalties
      o There will be a penalty of a maximum of $100,000 or $10,000/day for non-life-threatening issues. ie.) Max occupant load, fraud etc.
   d. Provincial Safety Code Officer
      o Provincial SCO’s are now granted AHJ authority for all of Alberta.
      o Able to 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.
      o This does not include Federal Airport Reserves.
   e. Alternative Solutions
      o The SCA now permits a client to appeal a variance proposal which has been refused by the SCO.
   
ii) Harmonized Code Project
   • Meetings have already started for this project and James is the Chair.
   • Default is to remove the Alberta specific articles unless specific need is provided.
   • Changes will be open to consultation.
   • Part 10 will stay
iii) STANDATA development and review
   - Building and Fire are to be reviewed.
   - Should be available by this coming December or January.

iv) Implementation of the National Energy Code of Canada for Buildings
   - Energy codes will come into place on November 1, 2015.
   - This affects all buildings
   - City of Calgary developed a compliance document. SCO's are to use this as reference.

v) Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) Fire Guideline
   - Applies to people 18+ with cognitive or physical disabilities residing within a residential unit.
   - There are roughly 856 of these facilities within Alberta, mainly in Calgary, Red Deer, and Edmonton.
   - Alberta Health is going back to stakeholders for consultation; therefore, the Minister has ASKED that all SCO's hold off on inspecting these properties.
   - Locations where life safety is a concern should still be reviewed if SCO's are aware of them.
   - A list of all these locations will be available from Alberta Health, no date given.

4: Michelle Plaizier, Administrator of Accreditation, Safety Codes Council

UPDATE

i) Certification and Training
   a. 2014 ABC & AFC Code Update Training
      - Mandatory code updates training for Building Safety Code Officers (BSCO's). Deadline for registration is July 1, 2016.
      - Courses can be taken through classroom or distance learning.
      - There is currently no training for Fire SCO's.
   b. Professional Development (for SCO's)
      - Will be implemented in 2017-18 once the ability to track points online is developed.
      - One is able to collect 30 points over three years.
   c. Certification and Training Structure (Building and Fire)
      - FSCO – additional consultation will be completed late 2015 or early 2016, with implementation in Sept. 2016.
      - BSCO – consultation of the program was conducted. The Council is looking to align with the requirements of other provinces, and provide a clear scope.

ii) Alberta Safety Codes Authority (ASCA)
   - Begins operation on January 1, 2016
• Goals are to improve service delivery, consistency, and sustainability.
• Currently working on developing the contract with Agencies, working with the GoA framework, developing eSite, and training for Agency SCO’s.
• Will be working on mobile inspections in the next year.

iii) QMP Review
• Working to ensure it incorporate best practices
• Reviewed to continue into 2016.
• Aiming to complete by the end of 2016.

iv) Safe Temporary Propane Heat Program
• Designed to help ensure temporary propane heat setups on construction sites are safe.
• For requests on material information email communication@safetycodes.ab.ca

v) Student Awards Program
• This program was created to attract qualified applicants who want to become Safety Code Officers.
• Eligible people are those involved in paying fees, AB residents, meet entry level qualifications, register for training within 6 months and complete the application form.
• These awards can be for any discipline, both an existing or new SCO.
• Application deadlines are October 15, 2015 & April 15, 2016.
• Awards are $1000 each.
• See Council website for more information: http://www.safetycodes.ab.ca/SCO/Training/Pages/Student-Awards-Program.aspx

vi) Certification & Accreditation Awards
• This program recognizes outstanding contribution of an SCO, or an accredited Organization, Corporation, or Municipality etc.
• Nomination opens in January 2016.

5: Joint Meeting with Building and Fire

NFPA 1142 – ABC’06 vs. ABC’14
• All buildings must be serviced by a fire hydrant (see PPT Presentation).
• Review Chapters 7 and 8.

New “Running Man” Exit Signs
• Further clarification on the installation of these signs in renovation situations will be coming from the CBA through a bulletin or an Interpretation.
• Where new signs are being installed and existing exit signs are in place, it is the CBA’s interpretation that the new ‘running man’ signs should be applicable to the entire floor area.
• This is to limit the confusion for the public in an emergency.
• There will be some exceptions for larger buildings, like hospitals, which may require review by the local SCO to determine where it is applicable.

6: General Code Concerns - Building Session

Radon Gas

• Grande Prairie has stated that they will look for venting through the rim, with solid pipe. They will be utilizing an optional inspection to review the installations. They will permit either solid or perforated pipe under the slab.

• Question Posed: Will NHBP cover radon gas installations? Answer: To Follow.

• Sealants used to seal the concrete slab should be compatible with the materials it is adhering to.

• Utilizing the sump as a collection point for the gas can be done.

• Clean granular material with not more than 4% of particulates will meet the intent of the ABC. The gravel does NOT need to be a “washed” type.

• On commercial buildings, only those buildings who have an occupancy for more than 4 hours require radon mitigation. Most are going with performance methods for mitigation.

• Commercial installations - under EPA mitigation systems are only a guideline, there is no required installation for radon mitigation.

• Question Posed: Is granular under the slab mandated?? Answer: Yes it is under the 9.16.2.1. of the ABC.

• Question: Is there a specific type of label which should be used for Radon pipe? Answer: Within clause 9.13.4.3(3)(b)(iii) the ABC is states that the pipe should be labelled. There are no specific requirements on how or what the label should look like, other than ensuring that the pipe is clearly labeled for its intent only for the removal of radon gas. Therefore, it would be to the AHJ’s discretion to determine if the label met this intent.

• Every jurisdiction is handling the new installation and inspection of the rough-in in their own way. Some through spot inspections, some through plans review information.

Secondary Suites

• New requirement within the ABC for clearances and protection for soffits between separate compartments under 9.10.12.4. and unprotected openings within 2m vertically and 3m horizontally of separate compartments under 9.9.4.5. These clearances now apply to secondary suite developments in a house.

• There are some exceptions that can be made when the house is sprinklered or when appropriate closures have been installed.

• When each unit is provided with separate metering, interconnection of the smoke alarms is not permitted under the Electrical Code. A new Standata will be developed to address this conflict.

• New Appendix note for separate heating systems for secondary suites. The Appendix note specifically states that a damper system separating the units is not considered to be a workable solution. These systems can be costly, require regular inspection and maintenance, and must be reset after activation.

Care and Dementia Patients

• With the addition of the new B3 classification, the distinction between Treatment and Care facilities can be difficult in a situation where dementia patients are being cared for. In these situations, it is important that the appropriate classification is used. Confirmation from the designer, the owner or
Alberta Health Services could be reviewed for confirmation of the appropriate classification of the building.

Modular Buildings and the CAN/CSA-A277 Standard

- It has been noticed that Assembly Occupancies were omitted from the scope of the A-277 standard. "This Standard specifies the procedure for factory certification of manufactured, modular, and panelized buildings intended for residential, commercial, semi-commercial, or industrial use."
- As per AMA’s understanding, the standard was meant to include all classifications, and an amendment is anticipated in the next edition of the standard.

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 specifically 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.
- Question: Are the clearances noted on page 3, measured from the foundation wall, or from the wall penetration location? Penetrations through the exterior cladding may be reduced at these locations. Answer: Quite often there is a small discrepancy between the foundation wall clearance and the finished wall cladding clearance. In these situations, the foundation wall clearance would be used.
- Question: How are clearances measured when the vent is located on a cantilever? Answer: Where venting is permitted to be placed on the face of a cantilever, the clearances would be measured from the cantilever exterior face.
- Question: Why are penetrations in cantilevers within the 1.2m side yard allowed? Answer: Direct vent appliances are not applicable to the requirements for Category III or Category IV piping. Therefore, the penetration in the side cantilever is not an issue.

Smoke Alarms

- There are new requirements in the 2014 ABC for smoke alarms.
- Only one smoke alarm is required per floor area, the 5m dimension and the raised floor areas requirements have been removed.
- Two new standards, the CAN/ULC-S553 “Installation of Smoke Alarms” and CAN/ULC-S531 “Smoke Alarms” have been referenced within the 2014 ABC.
- The S531 standard references the device requirements, and labels required.
- The S553 references the installation requirements such as specific locations.
- Question: Are smoke alarms required in service rooms in a secondary suite application? Answer: Under the 2014 ABC, Section 9.10.19, smoke alarms are not required within service rooms. Fire detectors are required in service rooms where a fire alarm system is installed and the building is not sprinklered.

Farm Buildings

- Farm buildings are those with low human occupancy.
- If the public has access to the building, then it is not classified as a farm building.
Swimming Pools
- The definition of swimming pools has changed. The 600mm limitation has been removed from this definition, but remains within the definition of “wading pool”.

Shed
- Question: Is a small storage shed required to be anchored to the ground? Answer: Storage Sheds equal to or less than 10 sq m in size are not required to be anchored to the ground, however, under 9.323.6.3. all other structures would be required to provide anchorage meeting the CSA Z240.10.1 standard. The requirements under 9.35.4.4. could also be proposed under an Alternative Solution.

Energy Code
- R-Values provided in Table 9.25.2.1. will no longer be referenced once 9.36 Energy Efficiency has been adopted in Alberta on November 1, 2016.

Thermal Barriers in bonus Room Floors
- Return air plenums under bonus room floors, when insulated with spray foam insulation must provide thermal barrier protection.

Medical Gas Piping
- There has been no definitive answer on if Medical Gas Piping will be removed from the ABC and placed in the Gas Code. The upcoming 2015 B149.1 Natural Gas and Propane Installation Codes do not include information on Medical Gas Piping.

7A: General Code Concerns – Fire Session – Guest Speakers

Pat Purnell, FE Program Manager for Intertek: Fire Extinguishers (FE) Labelling and Listing – Information
- This program is to help create awareness and educate authorities.
- UL is American. Labels should be in compliance with Canada -> ULC.
- Consumers, public, and SCO’s must ensure fire extinguishers are in compliance and must have a label with a certificate number and WH-ETL marker/logo
- Check if equipment is certified in Alberta.
- Tom Harnos asks if there is a height, measurement, dimension, standard for a FE storage compartment. Action: Pat to respond once he gets the correct information.
- **Intertek to post list of certified companies. SCC to verify them first.**
- ULC questions can be directed to Trevor Brice.
- Contact Pat for questions or concerns at 403-877-0586 or via email at patrick.purnell@intertek.com.
- In regards to portable extinguisher services - Trevor Brice asks when a used extinguisher needs to be replaced with a new one; do we wait until expiration date? Action: Pat to respond once he gets the correct information.
Trevor Brice, Chief Fire Administrator, AMA: Code Changes – Explanation on the sale and use of the fireworks

- Unless there is a by-law, you cannot sell fireworks.
- Permission from the Chief Administrator is required in order to sell fireworks. Along as the seller follows code.
- The sale of fireworks is not in the National Code books, it is Alberta specific.
- Consultation with key stakeholders as to what the people want will happen soon – an agreement must be met first.

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 or code do not line up please contact Municipal Affairs and ask for either Tina Parker or Tom Harnos.
- Contact Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC) should you need codes from previous years.
- Note that changes are also in the appendix and reference sections.
- Note that reported accidents are $250+.