

## **Municipal Fire Inspection Policy**

The policy statement contained in this document is provided by FireWise Consulting Ltd. to assist municipal governments to determine the level and frequency of fire inspection service they provide. Although this policy has been vetted by legal counsel each municipal council should seek independent legal advice before it (the policy) is adopted in whole or in part.

### **Policy Statement**

References in this policy to “the Act” are to the Fire Services Act (RSBC 1996) Chapter 144, and references to a Section are to sections of the Act.

Whereas Section 26 (1) requires that municipal councils provide for a regular system of inspection of hotels and public buildings in the municipality (“hotel” being defined in the Act as including an apartment house, a residential building with two or more levels of strata lots, and a boarding house, lodging house, club or any other building, except a private dwelling, where lodging is provided; and “public building” being defined in the Act to include a factory, a warehouse, store, mill, school, hospital, theatre, public hall, office building and any building other than a private dwelling house);

and

Whereas Section 36 (3) requires that municipal councils provide for a regular system of inspection by an officer of buildings in the municipality (“building” being defined in that Section to include a hotel, public building, church, theatre, hall or other building used as a place of public resort; and “officer” being defined in that Section to mean a local assistant and, in a municipality, the chief police officer and any other person authorized by the municipal council to exercise some or all of a local assistant’s powers under Part 2 of the Act); and Whereas it is desirable that the Council of the Municipality of [NAME HERE] specify:

1. How often buildings should be inspected;
2. The qualifications of local assistants and (under Section 36) officers who carry out inspections; and
3. The nature of inspections;

and

Whereas regular inspections provide the following benefits:

1. The identification and potential elimination of fire safety deficiencies;
2. The reduction of the likelihood or severity of fires, the reduction of the endangerment of life or property, and reduction of danger to firefighters; and
3. The opportunity to educate building owners and occupants about fire safety and their responsibility for ensuring compliance with current codes and standards and the general safety of buildings they own or occupy;
4. A means of inducing property owners to correct the deficiencies identified during the inspection in a timely manner;

Therefore, the Council of the Municipality of [NAME HERE] adopts the following policy with respect to the regular system of fire inspections required by the Act:

- A. Each hotel or (for the purposes of Section 36) building must be inspected not less frequently than within 12 months of the last inspection;
- B. Each public building that is not a hotel or building as defined in Section 36 must be inspected not less frequently than within 18 months of the last inspection;
- C. Each inspection shall include a reasonable attempt to ascertain whether:
  - a. any of the conditions listed in Section 21 apply; and
  - b. the owner or occupier of the public building is in apparent compliance with the requirements contained in Sections 30, 31, 32 and any Regulations passed on the Act;
- D. A local assistant or other person authorized to carry out an inspection must have the following qualifications:
  - a. be certified by the Office of the Fire Commissioner of BC at the basic fire prevention inspector level or higher;
  - b. possesses other qualifications that are greater than those referred to above.