



Tuesday e-Tech Alert
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NICET Restricts Materials Allowed in Exams

At yesterday's meeting of the Fire Protection Advisory Committee that oversees its fire protection certification programs, the National Institute for Certification in Engineering Technologies (NICET) announced a change in its testing policies. Effective immediately, the only materials that will be allowed to be taken into the examinations are those specifically referenced in the "Selected General Reference" and "Relevant Standard" sections of the NICET program detail manuals. These lists include relatively little other than the NFPA standards and standard reference documents such as the NFPA *Fire Protection Handbook* and the NFSA *Fire Sprinkler Plan Review Guide*. Study guides, review books and notes are no longer permissible and will be seized and held by proctors during the examination. Candidates will have the opportunity to challenge affected work elements on the basis of seized materials. In other words, the examinations have changed from "open book" to a limited version of open book.

The change was motivated by a study manual published for fire alarm technicians that used actual examination questions, compromising the integrity of the exam question bank. NICET is pursuing the unauthorized possession and use of these test questions as violations of Federal copyright law.

According to Mike Clark, Chief Operating Executive for NICET, a letter was recently sent to all NICET Test Site Supervisors and Test Proctors, advising them to police the materials brought into the examination. The information is also being communicated to all testing candidates, but did not get out to all candidates sitting for exams this past weekend, which may have resulted in some problems.

Candidates that challenge work elements on the basis of seized materials must list the materials' title, author, edition and copyright date, along with a detailed description of relevance. If the challenge is upheld, NICET will allow re-testing of the affected work elements at no additional fee.

Upcoming NFSA "Technical Tuesday" Seminar – November 6th

Topic: Spec Buildings

Instructor: Kenneth E. Isman, P.E., Vice President of Engineering

Date: November 6, 2007

A fundamental assumption of NFPA 13 is that the sprinkler system is designed to match the use of the building. But what do sprinkler contractors do if the use of the building has not been established by the owner? What if the owner does not know how the building is going to be used and is just putting up the building in the hopes that someone else will buy or lease it? This

seminar will provide strategies that sprinkler contractors can use to adequately protect these buildings that are being constructed without specific uses in mind.

Information and registration for this seminar is available at www.nfsa.org or by calling Dawn Fitzmaurice at 845-878-4200 ext. 133 or email: dawn@nfsa.org.

NFSA Announces Technical Tuesday Onlines for 1st Half of 2008

For the first half of 2008, the NFSA “Technical Tuesday” Online Seminars will carry a “Systems Update” theme, focusing on recent changes in system requirements. In each of ten selected subject areas, the seminars will feature an update on rules changes that are important to fire sprinkler contractors, technicians, and authorities having jurisdiction. The seminars will present information not only on the changes themselves, but in many cases on the research, deliberations and intentions behind the changes, which provide valuable insights needed for proper application.

| Date | Topic | Instructor |
|-------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Jan 29 | Wet Systems | Victoria B. Valentine, P.E. |
| Feb 12 | Dry and Preaction Systems | Russell P. Fleming, P.E. |
| Feb 26 | Antifreeze System Updates | Kenneth E. Isman, P.E. |
| Mar 11 | NFPA 13R Systems-Outside the Dwelling Unit | Cecil Bilbo, Jr. |
| Apr 1 | Foam Sprinkler Systems Update | Russell P. Fleming, P.E. |
| Apr 22 | Water Supply Systems | Cecil Bilbo, Jr. |
| May 6 | Exposure Protection Systems | Russell P. Fleming, P.E. |
| May 20 | Water Cooling Towers | Michael Friedman, P.E. |
| Jun 10 | Standpipes, Pressures and Pumps | Kenneth E. Isman, P.E. |
| Jun 24 | The Extent of Systems | Jeff Hugo |

The following are the descriptions for each class:

January 29, 2008 – **Wet Systems** – Victoria B. Valentine, P.E, Director of Product Standards – Basic/Intermediate

Wet-pipe sprinkler systems are the baseline type of sprinkler system. This seminar will review what makes a system a system. Common questions that arise such as how to define a system, how to define a riser and what are the functions of the system connections will also be addressed. Other items that will be included are system sizes, corrosion issues and pressure reducing valves.

February 12, 2008 – **Dry and Preaction Systems** – Russell P. Fleming, P.E., Executive Vice President – Intermediate

The 2007 edition of NFPA 13 incorporated some important new changes with regard to both dry pipe and preaction systems. The new rules affect water delivery times, pitching requirements, and freezer protection options. Discussion will also be included on system attributes that affect valve trip, water delivery time and other aspects of system performance. It will also address variations of preaction systems, including some that are not specifically addressed within NFPA 13.

February 26, 2008 – **Antifreeze System Updates** – Kenneth E. Isman, P.E, Vice President of Engineering – Intermediate

In the 2007 edition of NFPA 13, many changes were made regarding the use of antifreeze systems including the calculation techniques that are required to be used and the concentrations of solutions that are permitted. This seminar will provide an overview of antifreeze system requirements, review and explain the basis behind the changes in the 2007 edition, and provide examples of how to perform the new calculations.

March 11, 2008 – **NFPA 13R Systems – Outside the Dwelling Unit** – Cecil Bilbo, Jr., Director of Technical Services – Intermediate

NFPA 13R, Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems in Residential Occupancies up to and Including Four Stories in Height, has two different levels of protection required. The protection requirements “inside the dwelling” can be less demanding than “areas outside the dwelling.” Participants will learn what portions of a building need to follow the rules for areas outside of the dwelling. The correct type of sprinkler for these applications will be identified, as will the density and area requirements. There will be references to both NFPA 13 and NFPA 13R. Participants should be ready to move back-and-forth between these standards to gain a thorough understanding on when and how to identify these areas.

April 1, 2008 – **Foam Sprinkler Systems Update** – Russell P. Fleming, P.E., Executive Vice President – Intermediate

This seminar will focus on recent changes to the NFPA standards on foam and foam-water systems (NFPA 11 and 16). The presentation will include a discussion of the use of the Darcy-Weisbach formula for hydraulic calculations for piping carrying foam concentrate. Special attention will be given to the growing acceptance of fixed piping systems employing compressed air foam (CAF) technology.

April 22, 2008 – **Water Supply Systems** – Cecil Bilbo, Jr., Director of Technical Services – Basic/Intermediate

When a sprinkler system is called on to help control a fire in a building, the adequacy of the water supply can determine if property and lives will be saved. Understanding the different types of water supplies that can be used in the NFPA Standards will ensure the system works properly. Whether it is a city water supply, fire pump, tank, or a pond, you will need to know the rules that affect the installation, testing, use and inspection of the different types of water supply systems. This seminar will cover a broad review of the rules for each of the types of water supplies allowed for use in fire protection systems. It will also cover some of the federal regulations that have made it into each state and county in the United States.

May 6, 2008 – **Exposure Protection Systems** – Russell P. Fleming, P.E., Executive Vice President – Intermediate

Changes to the 2007 edition of NFPA 13 restored long-lost criteria to the standard that is necessary for proper installation of an exposure protection system. This seminar will not only review how that criteria is applied, but review the use of exposure protection systems in the context of the entire need for exposure protection based on the principles of NFPA 80A exposure protection recommended practice and corresponding provisions of model building codes in the United States and Canada.

May 20, 2008 – **Water Cooling Towers** – Michael J. Friedman, P.E., NFSA Consultant – Intermediate

Protection of cooling towers falls under the umbrella of “Special Hazards” in the fire protection industry. This seminar will provide an overview of design considerations such as type of cooling tower, materials of construction for towers and system piping. It shall also cover types of fire protection systems, devices, detection methods and design criteria and system testing based on NFPA 214, Standard on Water-Cooling Towers, 2005 Edition.

June 10, 2008 – **Standpipes, Pressures and Pumps** – Kenneth E. Isman, P.E, Vice President of Engineering – Intermediate

Standpipe systems in very tall buildings have always been a challenge. Recent changes in NFPA 14 and NFPA 20 have made these systems more difficult to design and install. This seminar will cover the effect of decisions such as breaking up the system into multiple vertical zones, using pressure reducing valves, and using variable speed pumps. The new provisions of NFPA 14 for master pressure reducing valves will also be explored.

June 24, 2008 – **The Extent of Systems** – Jeff Hugo, Manager of Codes – Basic

Are sprinklers required under a Porte-Cochere? When is an addition a separate building? Does the foundation of a building have anything to do with sprinklers? This seminar will answer those questions that stump the designer and can come out to haunt you in some jurisdictions. The Extent of Systems will go into detail on where to install sprinklers, where the codes and standards designate them, and how to justify their existence or non-existence. This seminar will also summarize the “Systems” theme for the first half of 2008.

Because these seminars are being offered as a complete “Systems Update” program, a 30% discount is available when signing up for all ten seminars in the series.

Information and registration for this seminar series is available at www.nfsa.org or by calling Dawn Fitzmaurice at 845-878-4200 ext. 133 or email: dawn@nfsa.org.

Additional NFSA training opportunities include...

NFSA Technician Training Classes

Two-Week Technician Training Seminar

November 5-16, 2007
February 4-15, 2008

Newburgh, NY
Centennial, CO

NICET Inspector Certification Review Class

November 6-8, 2007

Providence, RI

For more information on any of these classes, contact Nicole Sprague by calling 845-878-4200 ext. 149 or email: Sprague@nfsa.org.

In-Class Training Seminars

The NFSA training department also offers in-class training on a variety of subjects at locations across the country. Here are some seminars scheduled between now and the end of the year:

Nov 6-7 Two-day NFPA 13 Overview & Intro to Plan Review////Durango, CO
Nov 8 Sprinklers for Dwellings////Durango, CO
Dec 11 Pumps for Fire Protection////Marana, AZ
Dec 12 Fire Pump Layout & Sizing (1/2 Day) (A.M.)////Marana, AZ
Dec 12 Standpipe Systems (1/2 Day) (P.M.)////Marana, AZ
Dec 13 Inspection, Testing & Maintenance////Marana, AZ

For more information on these seminars, or to register, please visit www.nfsa.org or call Michael Repko at 845-878-4207 or email: seminars@nfsa.org.

NFSA Tuesday eTechAlert is c. 2007 National Fire Sprinkler Association, and is distributed to NFSA members on Tuesdays for which no NFSA Technical Tuesday Online Seminar is scheduled. Statements and conclusions are based on the best judgment of the NFSA Engineering staff, and are not the official position of the NFPA or its technical committees or those of other organizations except as noted. Opinions expressed herein are not intended, and should not be relied upon, to provide professional consultation or services. Please send comments to Russell P. Fleming, P.E. fleming@nfsa.org.

About the National Fire Sprinkler Association

Established in 1905, the National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA) is the voice of the fire sprinkler industry. NFSA leads the drive to get life-saving and property protecting fire sprinklers into all buildings; provides support and resources for its members – fire sprinkler contractors, manufacturers and suppliers; and educates authorities having jurisdiction on fire protection issues. Headquartered in Patterson, N.Y., NFSA has regional operations offices throughout the country. www.nfsa.org.