

Safety Codes Council Fire QMP Audit Recommendations

ISC UNRESTRICTED



1000, 10665 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5J 3S9
(780) 413-0099

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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City of Calgary (Fire)

The Safety Codes Council (SCC) in administering its responsibilities and duties under the *Safety Codes Act*, audits Alberta's safety codes system. These audits provide an objective and unbiased assessment of performance, effectiveness, and risk associated with Alberta's safety codes system. The audits are observations of the safety codes system and those providing services within it; measured against legislative requirements, policies and directives of the Safety Codes Council, and industry best practice.

The Safety Codes Council audit process takes into consideration the:

- overall management and commitment of accredited organizations;
- accreditation administration of services of the Quality Management Plan including permitting, inspections, and related financial administration of fees and levies;
- certification in respect to safety codes officer and permit issuer engagement and practices;
- Master Electricians program including Master Electrician activities; and
- general processes such as Orders, Variances, and other safety codes services.

This audit, conducted on November 5-7, 2013, focused on the City of Calgary's accreditation in the Fire discipline. Only those processes, practices, and activities related to the administration of the Fire discipline were considered. The audit took into consideration:

- 30 of the 10,076 inspections conducted in 2012;
- 23 of the 1,863 fire investigations conducted in 2012;
- 5 of the compliance Orders from 2012 and the 26 open Orders from 2006 through 2011;
- 2 of the 2 Variances/Alternative Solutions issued in 2012; and
- the roles and responsibilities of safety codes officers, staff, and contracts related to providing services in the fire discipline.

The process of fees and levies payable to the Safety Codes Council was discussed with the Fire Marshal. Orders of compliance and Variances/Alternative Solutions that were issued in this timeframe and from previous years were reviewed.

In general, the audit found the City of Calgary and its staff to be providing fire services with integrity and reasonableness in meeting with the intent of the *Safety Codes Act* and the City of Calgary's approved QMP. The audit found three (3) instances in which recommendations for improvement are provided. These are in relation to conducting an annual self-assessment of its operation in the safety codes system, the accountable tracking of enforcement processes, and modifying the QMP to ensure objectives can be met.

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The recommendations from the audit are:

- The current accreditation standard requires accredited municipalities to conduct an annual review of their QMP program and provide the SCC with a letter of findings including areas of conformance and those requiring improvements and measures to be implemented.

Recommendation: Ensure the administration of the QMP is reviewed with a report being filed with the Administrator of Accreditation annually. This annual review is not required during a year in which the accreditation is audited by the Safety Codes Council. All amendments to the QMP require acceptance by the Administrator of Accreditation prior to implementation.

- Inspections are conducted utilizing a frequency schedule as outlined in the QMP and on request or complaint basis. The Municipality operates a 311 system where citizens can call in requests for service which are then submitted to the appropriate department. The inspectors have a schedule of inspections they are expected to conduct. The 311 system generates a non-scheduled workload which often does not allow the SCOs to keep to the scheduled inspections. The frequency schedule for inspections cannot be fulfilled due to the requests and complaints generated by 311.

Recommendation: That the municipality reviews its safety codes services in the Fire discipline to achieve its commitment to services. There are a number of options such as, but not limited to, engaging a contracted accredited agency to assist, acquiring additional Fire Safety Codes Officers to respond to the workload, amending the service level standard in the Quality Management Plan, etc.

- Two (2) compliance Orders were issued in 2012. There are 26 orders open from 2006 through 2011. A plan was discussed with the Coordinator of Inspections to clear these outstanding orders.

Recommendation: Develop and implement a process and tracking system for enforcement of the Safety Codes Act including closure upon compliance.

The auditors found the City of Calgary to be open, transparent, and cooperative with the audit. The City also showed a high level of support from management and elected officials towards safety codes operations and authority. We thank the City of Calgary for their commitment to safety and the participation, involvement, and support in conducting this audit. We look forward to assisting you in the future.

SAFETY CODES COUNCIL



Gerald Baron, SCO, CTAJ
Director of Operations