

UNSM Conference

The OFM, *Monitoring of Municipalities*

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Agenda

- Welcome/Introductions
- Fire Safety Act & Regulations
- Auditor General / Recommendations
- Our Approach
 - How we will get there
 - Risk evaluation framework
 - How can we better support you and your respective municipalities to meet their mandate
- Next steps.....

Fire Safety Act, Section 19

- Establish a system of fire safety Inspections
- Appoint a municipal fire inspector
- Advise the OFM is advised in writing of appointment and revocation of such
- Record inspections
- Make records available to OFM on request
- Keep records for at least 5 years

FSR, Section 13, 14, 15

- Assembly occupancies every 3 years
- System of Inspections for all building occupancies of residential over 3 units, business, mercantile and industrial
- Failure by municipality to inspect, OFM inspected and municipality pays

Auditor General's Office

- AG report released May 2011
- 25 recommendations in a number of areas: management information, inspection and enforcement activities, monitoring of municipalities etc.
- Commitment to address all within 18-24 months.

AG Recommendations: Monitoring of Municipalities

Four key recommendations:

- Define an appropriate system of inspection;
- Perform inspections when municipalities fail to complete;
- Develop policies and procedures to follow up on deficiencies as identified during our review; and
- Develop a plan to determine if municipalities are complying.

Our Approach

- Collaborative – municipalities working group established of key stakeholders /partners to inform decision making
- Open - Questionnaire circulated last fall to obtain input/feedback related to minimum system of inspection
- Realistic – any change will take time
- Practical – looking at a phased in approach and this is **not** a one size fits all solution

Where we need to be

- Determine minimum requirement for an appropriate system of inspection;
- Set “reasonable” parameters with legislative requirements so municipalities have some discretion in their system of inspection;
- Review/evaluate those systems and decisions made to ensure ongoing compliance; and
- Protect Nova Scotians from the risk of fires.

How to get there...

- OFM determine the principles/framework for the system; each municipality to define what it looks like for them
- Framework drafted, reviewed with working group; Guiding Principles to be established
- Tools that could provide support/assistance (i.e. Inspection checklist, risk evaluation framework)
- OFM to audit process
- Phased in Approach

Questionnaire Results

- A system of inspection is needed, will provide consistency
- System needs to be tailored; every municipality is different and has unique needs/challenges
- Level of risk needs to be considered; OFM to provide guidelines/advice to ensure consistency
- Resources are key – role/duties of inspector

Risk Evaluation Framework

- Specific recommendation by AG to define “serious fire safety deficiency”
- Need to consider in context of overall occupancy/use; risk evaluation assessment drafted
- Considerations: probability of occurrence and severity of injury/impact
- Rating determines inspection frequency so buildings with the greatest degree of risk are inspected more frequently
- Appropriate use of the framework/tool could justify a deviation from a minimum standard

Risk Assessment

- Questionnaire results confirm need for risk assessment
- OFM staff have reviewed this in terms of other occupancies (B-F) to benchmark frequency and when a deviation may be warranted
- Tool can be provided

General feedback

- Municipalities are required to be on side?
 - Municipalities need to recognize the importance of fire safety inspections: competing priorities
 - Municipalities need to dedicate resources
 - OFM continue to work with the municipalities through provincial inspectors association (FIANS) to provide training, leadership, support to ensure consistency and accountability
 - overall approach/perspective of municipality may differ from municipality to municipality

Discussion, Monitoring of Municipalities

- Does this approach make sense?
- What ideas do you have to ensure success?
- General thoughts/comments

Wrap up/closing

- Closing comments
- Next steps