

# Fire Prevention and Community Risk Reduction Division

## A Business Leader's Resource: Strategies for Cost-Effective Fire Code Compliance

A Guidebook for Businesses & Property Owners  
When Contracting Services for Required  
Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance (ITM)  
for Fire Protection Systems

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The requirements of this Guidebook are as per  
the adopted and locally ammended International Fire Code (IFC)  
applicable within the Poudre Fire Authority (PFA)



POUDRE FIRE AUTHORITY

102 Remington St. Fort Collins, CO 80524 970.416.2891 [www.poudre-fire.org](http://www.poudre-fire.org)

# POUDRE FIRE AUTHORITY

## Fire Prevention and Community Risk Reduction (FPCRR) Division

### POUDRE FIRE AUTHORITY CONTACTS

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The Poudre Fire Authority (PFA) is committed to supporting our businesses and property owners in their efforts to effectively and efficiently maintain their fire protection systems. This can be a complex endeavor, and for this reason we are here to assist. Please don't hesitate to contact our office if we can be a resource for understanding what is required, how best to achieve it, and if you have questions or concerns along the way.

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We encourage you to get to know your assigned PFA Fire Inspector. Please find our fire inspector district map on our website [www.poudre-fire.org](http://www.poudre-fire.org)

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## **PURPOSE & INTENT**

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The Poudre Fire Authority's (PFA's) leadership intent is to positively effect fire safe outcomes through community risk reduction (CRR) actions. This work prioritizes a customer-focused and educational approach.

This guidebook is intended for the business or property owner, and to provide them with an overview of what is required for the inspection, testing, and maintenance (ITM) of fire protection systems that serve their buildings or spaces, and best practice approaches to contracting these services.

## **OVERVIEW**

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The purpose of the adopted Fire Code (IFC) is to establish the minimum requirements consistent with nationally recognized good practice for providing a reasonable level of life-safety and property protection from the hazards of fire, explosion or dangerous conditions in new and existing buildings, structures and premises, and to provide a reasonable level of safety to firefighters and emergency responders during emergency operations. (*IFC, 101.3*)

### **What Business & Property Owners Need to Know-**

- The adopted Fire Code (IFC) functions as law, and therefore all requirements are mandatory.
- The IFC clarifies that it is the property owner's responsibility to maintain fire protection systems. This responsibility can be legally transferred to an assigned designee, such as a property manager or to a tenant or lessee by means of a contract. PFA may not be aware of contract arrangements between the property owner, their designee or their tenant(s), and therefore, may defer to the property owner of record for compliance-related responsibilities.
- The business or property owner should ensure that their servicing contractor knows exactly who and where inspection, testing, and maintenance (ITM) reports and information should be sent to, and that contacts are updated routinely for any property managers, tenants, etc. PFA does not coordinate this on behalf of the property owner.
- The IFC typically refers to a standard, such as those from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) which specifies requirements for how each fire protection system type is to be maintained. Albeit a fire protection system may have been approved at some point in time, often a recent maintenance standard applies, and therefore, there are some requirements that may apply retroactively.

### **What Business & Property Owners Need to Know (Continued)-**

- Many fire protection systems have weekly, quarterly, or similar requirements outside of the more primary semi- or annual inspection, testing, and maintenance (ITM) requirements performed by your servicing contractor. In many cases these requirements can be performed by the property owner or their designee with little time and effort, i.e., verifying that gauges have pressure and valves are not in the closed position, etc. The benefit of this is an enhanced familiarity with your building's fire protection systems and a potential cost savings. PFA is happy to answer any questions you may have regarding this, and to assist you with understanding what actions are feasible for a property owner or their designee to perform, and what actions are appropriate for a qualified servicing contractor to perform.
- The IFC defines minimum requirements. In some cases insurance providers have requirements that are above and beyond this minimum. PFA encourages you to proactively involve your insurance provider in a partnership approach towards risk reduction. In some cases this may result in a cost savings and/or reduced liabilities.
- A common request from businesses and property owners is for PFA to furnish a list of approved or preferred contractors. Important to note is that the role and responsibility of the fire code official is to remain impartial, and it is the position of PFA not to endorse, support, or make recommendations for specific servicing contractors. PFA accepts and approves work from any servicing contractor provided they meet PFA's minimum contractor qualifications and their work is compliant with the adopted Fire Code and applicable installation standards. Many business associations may elect to develop and maintain their own list of preferred servicing contractors based upon favorable experiences, cost, proven customer service, the ability to respond quickly because they have local availability, etc.
- In some cases servicing contractors may make recommendations for service work which is in addition to that which is required by code. PFA makes effort to review inspection, testing, and maintenance (ITM) reports on your behalf -the business and property owner- to ensure that contractors accurately represent this work as a recommendation and not a requirement. In some cases, PFA may reject an ITM report and make contact with a business or property owner if a recommendation is falsely represented as a requirement. This said, many recommendations are well intended and may be for preventative maintenance to reduce future costs and/or improve the life cycle of the fire protection system. PFA encourages businesses and property owners to review their ITM reports with their servicing contractor to better understand what work has been performed, what work will be required at a future time, and the associated costs of service.
- PFA requires that all servicing contractors who work in our jurisdiction have the capability to respond within a 4-hour timeline to address fire protection system emergency repairs, unplanned impairments, or similar conditions that warrant immediate action. PFA strongly encourages businesses and property owners to ensure that this is a condition of any contract or service agreement and that the cost for said service is fully understood, e.g., after hours service fees, trip charge fees, etc. PFA does not coordinate this on behalf of the business or property owner.

### **What Business & Property Owners Need to Know (Continued)-**

- PFA requires inspection, testing, and maintenance (ITM) reports to be submitted by the servicing contractors through our online compliance tracking system, Brycer's The Compliance Engine (TCE). Additional information can be found at [www.thecomplianceengine.com](http://www.thecomplianceengine.com).

Brycer's The Compliance Engine (TCE) charges the servicing contractor \$30.00 per ITM report submittal for all fire protection system types with exception to portable fire extinguishers. A \$15.00 submittal fee applies for (1-5) portable fire extinguishers, while a \$20.00 submittal fee applies for 6 and more portable fire extinguishers.

A portion of this fee is collected by PFA and partially compensates PFA for the time required by fire inspection staff to review and approve submitted ITM reports, and to effectively manage the compliance tracking system.

Additionally, Brycer's The Compliance Engine (TCE) charges the following late fees: \$5.00 for any report submitted after 30 days from the date of service, and \$15.00 for any report submitted after 120 days from the date of service.

PFA strongly encourages businesses and property owners to ensure that any fees passed onto the business or property owner by your servicing contractor are fully understood and are a condition of any contract or service agreement. PFA does not coordinate this on behalf of the business or property owner.

Furthermore, it stands to reason that any late fees incurred because the servicing contractor has failed to upload reports in a timely fashion (within 30 days from the date of service) should not be the responsibility of the business or property owner. This however is outside of PFA's scope of authority to enforce, and therefore, you are strongly encouraged to ensure that this is specified as a condition of any contract or service agreement. PFA does not coordinate this on behalf of the business or property owner.

- Brycer's The Compliance Engine (TCE) functions as a tracking and notification system on behalf of the PFA. Brycer's The Compliance Engine (TCE) does not have the legal authority to enforce requirements. PFA functions as the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ), and as the fire code official has the legal authority to make requirements, enforce requirements, issue approvals, and revoke approvals in accordance with law. PFA has established clear customer service expectations of Brycer's The Compliance Engine (TCE) for interactions with you, our customers. It is our hope that all supporting entities represent PFA's customer service expectations with every interaction. If this is not your experience, please don't hesitate to contact the Fire Inspection Services program directly.

### **What Business & Property Owners Need to Know (Continued)-**

- PFA has established minimum contractor qualifications for required inspection, testing, and maintenance (ITM) of fire protection systems within PFA's jurisdiction. These qualifications are required and supported by Colorado state law, C.R.S. 24-33.5-1202 & CRR 1507-11, the adopted Fire Code (IFC), applicable NFPA standards, manufacturer-specific requirements, and through the authority granted to the fire code official to define. Minimum contractor qualifications are defined at length in PFA's Information Notice 2026-02 and can be provided upon request to a business or property owner. These qualifications shall supersede any previous requirements or approvals to perform inspection, testing, and maintenance (ITM) work.

Qualifications are specific to the fire protection system type and can be complex to navigate. It is the responsibility of the servicing contractor to meet all qualifications as a matter of law, and prior to conducting work in PFA's jurisdiction; this applies to all individuals, companies, and servicing contractors. Individuals, companies, or servicing contractors who do not meet these qualifications are not approved to perform ITM work until these qualifications are met. In some circumstances, PFA may approve alternative means and methods for qualifications provided that it can be demonstrated that training, licensing, certification, and experience clearly provides an equivalency. PFA will not consider experience alone as an equivalency to training, licensing, certification, or as a sole means to being qualified.

PFA will reject any ITM reports submitted to Brycer's The Compliance Engine (TCE) where it is determined that the individual, company, or servicing contractor are not qualified as determined by PFA. Individuals, companies, or servicing contractors are required to upload proof of qualifications to Brycer's The Compliance Engine (TCE). Qualification requirements shall apply to each individual technician who performs ITM work. PFA may issue a stop work order for work that is performed by unqualified persons. PFA may refuse to approve work performed within our jurisdiction by individuals, companies, or servicing contractors who demonstrate an inability to meet qualification requirements. If necessary, PFA may refuse to approve work permanently for those who are unwilling to meet qualification requirements.

PFA strongly encourages businesses and property owners to ensure that conditions of any contract or service agreement specifies that those performing ITM work meet PFA's minimum contractor qualifications in full; that proof of said qualifications are uploaded into Brycer's The Compliance Engine (TCE) for each respective persons performing work; that these qualifications shall be maintained for the duration of the contract or service agreement; and that any associated costs for unapproved work (where it has been determined by PFA that the person who performed the work is not qualified), is the responsibility of the servicing contractor.

- Guidance provided by PFA shall not be construed as legal advice or counsel, rather, is intended to provide best-practice approaches for effective means and methods by the business or property owner to ensure compliance with the adopted Fire Code.

## **FIRE PROTECTIONS SYSTEMS THAT REQUIRE INSPECTION, TESTING & MAINTENANCE (ITM)**

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Property owners may be unaware of which fire protection systems they may have, what maintenance is required, and the service interval for said maintenance. The following is a list of fire protection systems that are regulated by the adopted Fire Code (IFC):

- **Water-Based Fire Protection Systems-**
  - **Fire Sprinkler Systems**, including wet-pipe, dry-pipe, antifreeze, preaction, etc.
  - **Standpipe Systems**
  - **Foam-water Spray Systems**
  - **Fire Pumps**
  - **Water Tanks**
  - **Private Fire Hydrants**
  - **Water-mist Systems**
  
- **Fire Alarm Systems**
- **Commercial Cooking Equipment & Extinguishing Systems (Including Type I Hoods)**
- **Commercial Cooking Equipment Cleaning**
- **Portable Fire Extinguishers**
- **Emergency Responder Communication Enhancement Systems (ERCES)**
- **Fire Doors and other Opening Protectives**
- **Emergency Power Supply Systems (Including Generators)**
- **Smoke Control Systems**
- **Gas Detection & Emergency Alarm Systems**
  
- **Alternative Automatic Fire-Extinguishing Systems-**
  - **Paint/Spray Booths**
  - **Wet-chemical Systems**
  - **Dry-chemical Systems**
  - **Foam Systems**
  - **Carbon Dioxide Systems**
  - **Halon Systems**
  - **Clean-agent Systems**
  - **Automatic Water Mist Systems**
  - **Hybrid Fire-extinguishing Systems**
  - **Aerosol Fire-extinguishing Systems**

## INSPECTION, TESTING & MAINTENANCE (ITM) INTERVALS

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Property owners may be unaware of the required inspection, testing, and maintenance (ITM) frequency for fire protection systems. The following is a list of common fire protection system types, a summary of their ITM intervals, and the applicable maintenance standard(s):

### ***Fire Protection System Type-***

### ***Required ITM Interval & Standard-***

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- **Water-Based Fire Protection Systems-**

- **Fire Sprinkler Systems**

**Annually as per NFPA 25**

*\*Some weekly, monthly & quarterly requirements can be accomplished by the property owner or their designee.*

*\*5-year ITM requirements apply.*

*\*Sprinklers have testing or replacement lifespans based upon the sprinkler types, damage, harsh environments, or if they have been removed, etc.*

- **Standpipe Systems**

**Annually as per NFPA 25**

*\*Flow testing & hydrostatic testing every 5-years.*

- **Foam-water Spray Systems**

**Annually as per NFPA 25**

*\*Numerous 5- and 10-year requirements associated with the foam and components.*

- **Fire Pumps**

**Annually as per NFPA 25**

*\*Weekly engine system & operational requirements.*

*\*50 operating-hour lubrication requirements.*

*\*5-year requirements for transmissions & torsional couplings.*

- **Water Tanks**

**Annually as per NFPA 25**

*\*Daily & weekly requirements for tanks with low-temperature alarms.*

*\*Quarterly requirements for inspection of valves, structural components, etc.*

*\*3-year internal inspection for steel tanks.*

*\*5-year internal inspection for other tank types.*

## INSPECTION, TESTING & MAINTENANCE (ITM) INTERVALS (CONTINUED)

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<i>Fire Protection System Type-</i>	<i>Required ITM Interval &amp; Standard-</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Water-Based Fire Protection Systems-</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Private Fire Hydrants</b></li></ul></li></ul>	<p><b>Annually as per NFPA 25</b></p> <p><i>*Annual flow testing of fire hydrants.</i></p> <p><i>*Main line strainers, annually and after each operation.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Water Mist Systems</b></li></ul>	<p><b>Annually as per NFPA 25</b></p> <p><i>*A complex arrangement of monthly, quarterly, semiannual, annual, and 5- &amp; 10-year requirements.</i></p> <p><i>*5-12 years compressed gas storage cylinder testing.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Fire Alarm Systems</b></li></ul>	<p><b>Annually as per NFPA 72</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Commercial Cooking Extinguishing System Service (Type I Hoods)</b></li></ul>	<p><b>Every 6-Months as per the IFC</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Commercial Cooking Equipment Cleaning (Hoods and All Equipment)</b></li></ul>	<p><b>High-volume = Every 3 Months as per the IFC</b></p> <p><i>*24-hour, high grease volume, woks, charbroiling, etc.</i></p> <p><b>Low-volume = Every 12 Months as per the IFC</b></p> <p><i>*Churches, seasonal businesses, senior centers, etc.</i></p> <p><b>Solid fuel-burning = Every Month as per the IFC</b></p> <p><i>*Wood- or coal-fired cooking equipment, etc.</i></p> <p><b>All Other Cooking = Every 6 Months as per the IFC</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Portable Fire Extinguishers</b></li></ul>	<p><b>Annually as per NFPA 10</b></p> <p><i>*Monthly inspection may be performed by the property owner or their designee, but this is not a substitute for the annual ITM required to be performed by qualified persons.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Emergency Responder Communication Enhancement Systems (ERCES)</b></li></ul>	<p><b>Annually as per the IFC</b></p>

## INSPECTION, TESTING & MAINTENANCE (ITM) INTERVALS (CONTINUED)

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<i>Fire Protection System Type-</i>	<i>Required ITM Interval &amp; Standard-</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Fire Doors and Opening Protectives</b></li></ul>	<p><b>Annually as per the IFC, NFPA 80 &amp; NFPA 105</b></p> <p><i>*Annual inspections for all fire doors other than rolling steel fire doors may be performed by the property owner, or their designee, provided that existing installations have not been modified, they are qualified to identify deficiencies, and as approved by PFA.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Emergency Power Supply Systems</b></li></ul>	<p><b>Annually as per NFPA 110</b></p> <p><i>*Shall be as per any manufacturer's requirements.</i></p> <p><i>*Complex arrangement of weekly, monthly, quarterly, and semi-annual requirements. Some of which may be accomplished by the property owner or their designee if they are qualified to do so, and as approved by PFA.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Smoke Control Systems</b></li></ul>	<p><b>Dedicated Systems = Semiannually as per the IFC</b></p> <p><b>Nondedicated Systems = Annually as per the IFC</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Gas Detection &amp; Emergency Alarms</b></li></ul>	<p><b>Annually as per the IFC</b></p> <p><i>*Sensor calibration as per the manufacturer's frequency.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Alternative Automatic Fire-Extinguishing Systems-</b></li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Wet-chemical Systems</b></li></ul></li></ul>	<p><b>Semiannually as per the IFC &amp; NFPA 17A</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Dry-chemical Systems</b></li></ul></li></ul>	<p><b>Semiannually as per the IFC &amp; NFPA 17</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Foam Systems</b></li></ul></li></ul>	<p><b>Annually as per NFPA 11 &amp; NFPA 25</b></p> <p><i>*Quarterly drainage requirements.</i></p> <p><i>*5-year strainer maintenance requirements.</i></p> <p><i>*Multiple 5- &amp; 10-year requirements.</i></p>

## INSPECTION, TESTING & MAINTENANCE (ITM) INTERVALS (CONTINUED)

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### ***Fire Protection System Type-***

### ***Required ITM Interval & Standard-***

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- **Carbon Dioxide Systems**  
**Annually as per the IFC & NFPA 12**  
*\*Every 6-months for high-pressure cylinders.*  
*\*Weekly inspection for low-pressure containers.*
- **Halon Systems**  
**Annually as per the IFC & NFPA 12A**  
*\*Every 6-months for container quantity & pressure.*
- **Clean-Agent Systems**  
**Annually as per the IFC & NFPA 2001**  
*\*Every 6-months for container quantity & pressure.*
- **Water Mist Systems**  
**Annually for Commercial Systems as per NFPA 25**  
*\*Quarterly, semiannual, 5- & 10-year requirements apply.*  
*\*Systems in one- and two-family dwellings are not regulated by the IFC.*
- **Hybrid Systems**  
**Annually as per NFPA 770**  
*\*Weekly and seminannual requirements apply.*
- **Aerosol Systems**  
**Semiannually as per the IFC**

## BUSINESS & PROPERTY OWNER CHECKLIST FOR HIRING SERVICING CONTRACTORS

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### INSPECTION, TESTING, AND MAINTENANCE OF FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS (ITM)

- PFA Support-**
  - If I have questions, I know to contact PFA's Fire Inspection Services team.
  - I know who my assigned Fire Inspector is if I need additional guidance or support.
  - I understand PFA's role and responsibilities are that of the fire code official/AHJ.
  - I understand my responsibility as the property owner to maintain fire protection systems regardless of using a property manager or having agreements with tenants.
  
- Fire Protection Systems-**
  - I know which fire protection system(s) I have in my building(s) that have ITM requirements.
  - I have a general understanding of the ITM frequency for each fire protection system type.
  - I have established an ITM plan with my servicing contractor which identifies my responsibilities and their responsibilities.
  
- Contracts & Service Agreements with Servicing Contractors-**

The following are recommended conditions of my contract or service agreement:

  - My servicing contractor meets PFA's minimum contractor qualifications as per Information Notice 2026-02.
  - My servicing contractor agrees to furnish proof of qualifications and upload these to Brycer's The Compliance Engine (TCE) for each technician who will perform ITM work.
  - My servicing contractor agrees to being qualified for the duration of my service agreement.
  - It is specified to which responsible person ITM reports shall be sent to, and my servicing contractor has up-to-date contact information.
  - I have spoken with my insurance provider to discuss proactive approaches, if additional requirements apply as a condition of my coverage, and if my actions can result in cost savings.
  - My servicing contractor will clearly identify and communicate when there are service recommendations and when they differ from code requirements.
  - My servicing contractor can meet PFA's requirement to respond within a 4-hour timeline for urgent matters, including emergency repairs, critical deficiencies or impairments. The fees for these services are clearly defined and understood.
  - I understand all fees charged by my servicing contractor to submit reports to Brycer's The Compliance Engine (TCE), and if my servicing contractor is charging more than the standard submittal fees.
  - My servicing contractor is responsible for submitting all ITM reports to Brycer's The Compliance Engine (TCE) within 30 days from the date of service, and that any resulting late fees are the responsibility of the servicing contractor.
  - My servicing contractor will coordinate tagging systems with deficiencies or impairments and reporting impairments or out-of-service notifications to PFA on my behalf.