

# Suppress!

PREVENTING FIRES... SAVING LIVES!  
...official newsletter for Fire Protection Technicians in British Columbia

## FIRE PROTECTION CERTIFICATION PROGRAM GOAL...

To ensure public health and safety by requiring fire protection technicians to be professionally qualified to inspect, test and maintain fire protection systems.

### GENERAL MEETING...

All Technicians and non-registrants are invited to a General Information Meeting.

LOCATION: **Fire Fighters Club**  
6515 Bonsor, Burnaby

DATE: **Tuesday,**  
**January 18, 2005**

TIME: **5:00 - 9:00 PM**

**Pizza and Pop supplied!**

### Complaints...

Complaint submissions must be in **writing and addressed to the ASTTBC Registrar** (Staff members dealing with certification issues **do not** handle complaints). The Registrar acts as Secretary to the Practice Review Board (PRB) who under the ASTT Act has responsibility for the review of registrants' conduct. Staff cannot accept verbal complaints.

Complainants should be aware that a false or malicious complaint may result in legal action by other parties.

### Complaint Procedure...

1. Fully document details of the alleged incident.
2. Must include full name and FP number of the technician (s) in question. ASTTBC can only act against registered members.
3. Must include name of business, contact person and phone number at the location where the alleged incident took place
4. Must include a **detailed written** description of the actual complaint.
5. Must include substantiated photocopy evidence of reports and tags, including photos if possible.
6. The complaint must be verified by an ASTTBC representative or the local fire department.
7. ASTTBC may call the complainant to discuss the issue and to ensure that there is proper information and evidence of an actual violation of the ASTTBC Code of Ethics and Practice Standards.
8. Providing there is reasonably substantiated information and evidence, a copy of the complaint will be forwarded to all parties involved for their comments.
9. Once ASTTBC has received comments from all parties, the Practice Review Board will review the complaint and make a recommendation. If necessary a Disciplinary Hearing will be held under the ASTT Act.

The Code of Ethics is for everyone and it can only work if information regarding unethical practices is reported to the ASTTBC Practice Review Board. This requires the combined efforts of Technicians and Fire Departments. It is through your vigilance and the powers of the PRB that violators can be held accountable.

December 2004

Issue No. 07

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published by:

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## Certification for Verification of Fire Alarms Systems

ASTTBC has been asked if we could certify Technicians for the Verification of fire alarm systems. The Fire Protection Certification Board has appointed a task force to investigate the feasibility of certifying technicians in this field. If you have any comments or suggestions please email or fax those comments to Larry Barker.

## Professional Practice – A Workplace Ethics Self Study Program

The Practice Review Board of ASTTBC will be recommending to the ASTTBC council that all new applicants for certification and any technicians that add disciplines will be required to complete a self-study in ethics prior to becoming certified. This step is being taken in light of the increasing number of complaints concerning the conduct of some technicians.

## Public Safety...

The fire protection certification program was instituted in 1996. Since that time there have been numerous complaints against Technicians doing inferior fire protection and testing and not abiding by the code of ethics. The work that is conducted by Fire Protection Technicians involves the life safety of the public. You are charged with doing this work in an ethical, comprehensive and professional manner in accordance with the minimum standards of the fire code. Anything less is unacceptable.

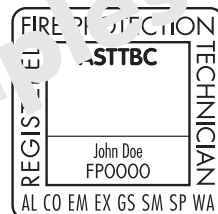
**ASTTBC is taking these complaints very seriously and will be disciplining those Technicians that put the safety of the public in jeopardy.**

## General Recommendations of the Disciplinary Committee...

1. Fire Protection Certification Board review the licensing of Trainers and review the training program which does not emphasize the wholly unacceptable practice of RFPT's pre-stamping tags and the suspected loaning of stamps.
2. That the Fire Protection Board review the completed log books of all Trainees at the time they apply for certification.

**Full Certification** is here as of July 1, 2001 and is in place in the lower mainland. That brought several important changes.

Professionals Title – Fire Protection Technicians that have met the minimum academic requirements and work history will be granted the title 'Registered Fire Protection Technician', and will be allowed to use the designation 'RFPT' after their names. The title and designation are federally protected trademarks reserved for use by Technicians who are currently registered with ASTTBC. Technicians who are NOT currently registered may NOT use the title or designation.



**TECHNICIAN STAMP** – As of July 1, 2001, all Registered Fire Protection Technicians in the lower mainland area and all 'Interim' certified Technicians in other areas of BC will be required to use the RFPT stamp. The stamp will identify the disciplines for which the technician has full certification. The disciplines are noted at the bottom of the stamp, and will include one or more of the following, depending on disciplines in which the Technician is registered...

- AL – Fire Alarms Systems,
- EX – Fire Extinguishers,
- EM – Unit Emergency Lighting,
- GS – Generator Systems,
- WA – Water-Based Fire Protection Systems,
- SM – Smoke Control Systems,
- CO – Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Cleaning, and
- SP – Special Fire Suppression Systems.

**MANY MUNICIPALITIES HAVE ENACTED A BYLAW** requiring ASTTBC registration to conduct fire protection inspection and testing services. Even though many municipalities have not as yet introduced a Bylaw to require ASTTBC registration, ASTTBC – certified Technicians are found in many areas of the province as the Technicians and/or their employers believe professional certification adds credibility to their services. Simply stated, they have a marketing edge.

ASTTBC encourages you to promote your professional certification in those areas that are not covered by a bylaw.

Municipalities that have enacted a Bylaw for the inspection and testing Fire Protection Systems:

- Vancouver
- Squamish
- District of North Vancouver
- City of North Vancouver
- Chilliwack
- Richmond
- Sechelt

Number of Technicians that have been certified in a discipline (as of February 2004)

Fire Alarms Systems	216
Fire Extinguishers	299
Unit Emergency Lighting	205
Generator Systems	24

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Water-Based Fire Protection Systems	181
Smoke Control Systems	28
Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Cleaning	28
Special Fire Suppression Systems	85

Using your stamp in municipalities without a Bylaw. Getting registered with ASTTBC is an important step in your recognition as a professional. You are obliged to use your stamp in ALL municipalities regardless of whether or not they have a Bylaw. This policy is required for several reasons: a) it demonstrates your registration with ASTTBC; b) it assures the client and public that a professionally registered technician has done the work; c) it gives you a marketing edge over those who are not registered; and, d) helps to promote ASTTBC registration within municipalities that do not as yet have a bylaw in place.

## Use of Fire Protection Technician Stamp...

It has been alleged that there are ASTTBC Registered Fire Protection Technicians who are both pre-stamping tags and indiscriminately allowing other persons to use those tags on fire protection equipment. Another alleged example is where only one individual in a company is an 'RFPT' and that Technician allows other employees to use their stamp. These matters are currently under investigation by the ASTTBC Practice Review Board.

This type of practice is completely unacceptable and falls under the jurisdiction of the ASTTBC Practice Review Board. Such misuse of a stamp would be grounds for cancellation of the Technician's certification and other penalties.

### Use of Stamp...

- Use of the stamp is dictated by the Regulations of the Applied Science Technologist and Technicians Act.
- The Stamp can be used only by a Registered Fire Protection Technician in good standing and to whom the stamp was issued.
- The right to use the stamp is a privilege granted a Technician by ASTTBC under the AST Act.
- The privilege can be removed if not used in an ethical or professional manner.

### Application of Stamp...

- The professional stamp should be applied in a clear and legible manner.
- The stamp should be used on any preliminary, draft or final documents, which have been prepared by the Technician or under the immediate supervision of the Technician.
- The **normal signature** of the Technician should be clearly shown in the space provided.
- The use of initials without surname is not recommended.
- The date the stamp is used, when required, should be noted.

**A Fire Protection Technician may only apply or use the stamp in those disciplines in which certification has been granted by ASTTBC.**

### BEWARE... BE ALERT!!!

#### Duplicate Technicians Stamps.

We have discovered that there is a stamp being used on inspection reports that is a fake. The stamp has no name or FP number and a scribble where the technician is required to sign. If you come across this type of stamp please notify the AHJ and ASTTBC immediately.

Any unauthorized reproduction or production of an ASTTBC RFPT stamp is a matter for both civil and criminal proceedings, as well as action by the Practice Review Board.

Technicians are encouraged to bring forward written complaints of breaches of these requirements and will be supported by ASTTBC in this matter; where necessary confidentiality will be maintained.

### RED TAGS – PROTOCOL FOR USE...

Red tags can be used by the Technician to indicate that the Fire Protection System was inspected, tested or maintained but does not provide the level of protection for which it was originally designed and installed or;

The Fire Protection System that is red tagged has deficiencies on the system that may cause it during activation, not to operate in the manner to which it was intended.

A red tag would be used to advise and alert, Owners or his Authorized Agent and Fire



Department Inspectors that although the system has been inspected, tested or maintained and there are deficiencies that remain on the system. The tag shall be defaced using a large (preferably red) 'X' across the front and on the back.

The Technician shall notify the owner or his authorized agent immediately of any deficiencies on the fire protection system(s).

A Deficiency report shall/may be forwarded to the Fire Department.

The tag shall be colored "Red on the top half of the tag" and; "The tag color is preferably white with contrasting colors." The Board will accept other colors as long as the 'Technician stamp' is clearly identified.

### Unacceptable Tagging Procedure...

It has been brought to our attention through a complaint that a Technician tagged a fire extinguisher in the following manner. The tag was left on the fire extinguisher did not have the fire protection discipline section filled in. By leaving this section blank this tag could be removed and attached to any fire protection system. The technician who had stamped the tag may be responsible for that particular fire protection systems.

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## Tags and Stamp...

1. Tag is a one year tag.
2. Stamp tag on completion of inspection.
3. Tick the appropriate discipline on completion.
4. Tick the 'additional work required' if necessary.
5. Tick the 'see log and report'.
6. Insert the next inspection date.

**Question...** "What is the procedure for tagging a Fire Extinguisher that requires additional work"

**Answer...** "The technician shall tick 'portable fire extinguisher', then stamp and sign the tag; tick the additional work required; tick see inspection and test reports. He may wish to identify the problem by writing on the back of the tag. When applying tags on fire extinguishers in glass faced enclosures please place the tag facing out so that it is easily readable by the Fire Inspector."

## Kitchen Exhaust Systems Cleaning...

Ecology Units, Air Purification Unit, Air Pollution Control Device, Grease Removal Device.

These devices are a separate box installed on the system after the first set of filters in the hood system. This box contains a set of filters to purify the air prior to it going into the atmosphere. These filters are required to be replaced on a regular basis by the manufacturer or their representative.

Kitchens have an on-going record of being serious concern as sources of fire and odours. It has been brought to our attention that there is a problem with the maintenance of these ecology systems. It is important to note that a Kitchen Exhaust Systems cleaner is required to inspect and or clean this part of the system.

The Ecology Unit should be inspected and cleaned on the inside. The filters should be inspected for but not limited to the following...

1. Are the filters in place and clean?
2. Are the filters punctured, cut out or otherwise made ineffective?
3. Is there grease blow by the filters?

## Tags and Inspection Reports...

If you find an ecology box on the system write it on the tag beside 'other'. If there are deficiencies as described tick **work required** and **see report**. Identify on the inspection report any deficiencies and make comments where necessary.

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## FIRE PROTECTION CERTIFICATION BOARD

### Stuart Affleck

Larry Barker, RFPT

Robert Barrett, RFPT

Derek Dickson, RFPT

Dale Maranda, RFPT, Chair

Wayne McLeod

Dave Newton

Brian Stegavig

Roy Swallow, RFPT

Les Sziklai

Costa Vlachias, ASCT, RFP

Stephen Watt

Codes and Standards Coordinator

Barker Fire Protection Services

Bartec Fire Safety Systems Ltd.

City of North Vancouver Fire & Rescue

D & S Chem-Spray Ltd.

SEMS Consulting Services

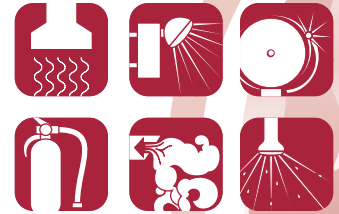
Cummins Western Canada

District of North Vancouver Fire Services

City of Vancouver, Fire & Rescue Services

Contec Fire and Safety Ltd.

Office of the Fire Commissioner



## For Information...

For further information about the Fire Protection Certification Program or if you would like assistance implementing the program in your community please contact Larry Barker at 604-585-2788 or email...

**lbarker@bsc-link.com**

Do your part and...  
**Suppress!**