

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9514, December 19, 2008]

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A COMPREHENSIVE FIRE CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES, REPEALING PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1185 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as the "Fire Code of the Philippines of 2008".

SEC. 2. It is the policy of the State to ensure public safety, promote economic development through the prevention and suppression of all kinds, of destructive fires, and promote the professionalization of the fire service as a profession. Towards this end, the State shall enforce all laws, rules and regulations to ensure adherence to standard fire prevention and safety measures, and promote accountability in the fire protection and prevention service.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - As used in this Fire Code, the following words and phrases shall mean and be construed as indicated:

Abatement - Any act that would remove or neutralized a fire hazard.

Administrator - Any person who acts as agent of the owner and manages the use of a building for him.

Blasting Agent - Any material or mixture consisting of a fuel and oxidizer used to set off explosives.

Cellulose Nitrate or Nitro Cellulose - A highly combustible and explosive compound produced by the reaction of nitric acid with a cellulose material.

Cellulose Nitrate Plastic (Pyroxylin) - Any plastic substance, materials or compound having cellulose nitrate (nitro cellulose) as base.

Combustible Flammable or Inflammable - Descriptive of materials that are easily set on fire.

Combustible Fiber - Any readily ignitable and free burning fiber such as cotton, oakum, rags, waste cloth, waste paper, kapok, hay, straw, spanish moss, excelsior and other similar materials commonly used in commerce.

Combustible Liquid - Any liquid having a flash point at or above 37.8 C (100 F).

Corrosive Liquid - Any liquied which causes fire when in contact with organic matter or with certain chemicals.

Curtain Board - A vertical panel of non-combustible or fire resistive materials attached to and extending below the bottom chord of the roof trusses, to divide the underside of the roof into separate compartments so that heat and smoke will be directed upwards to a roof vent.

Cryogenic - Descriptive of any material which by its nature or as a result of its reaction with other elements produces a rapid drop in temperature of the immediate surroundings.

Damper - A normally open device installed inside air duct system which automatically closes to restrict the passage of smoke or fire.

Distillation - The process of first raising the temperature to separate the more volatile from the less volatile parts and then cooling and condensing the resulting vapor so as to produce a nearly purified substance.

Duct System - A continuous passageway for the transmission of air.

Dust - A finely powdered substance which, when mixed with air in the proper proportion and ignited will cause an explosion.

Electrical Arc - An extremely hot luminous bridge formed by passage of an electric current across a space between two conductors or terminals due to the incandescence of the conducting vapor.

Ember - A hot piece or lump that remains after a material has partially burned, and is still oxidizing without the manifestation of flames.

Finishes - Materials used as final coating of a surface for ornamental or protective purposes.

Fire - The active principle of burning, characterized by the heat and light of combustion.

Fire Trap - A building unsafe in case of fire because it will burn easily or because it lacks adequate exits or fire escapes.

Fire Alarm - Any visual or audible signal produced by a device or system to warn the occupants of the building or fire fighting elements of the presence or danger of fire to enable them to undertake immediate action to save life and property and to suppress the fire.

Fire Door - A fire resistive door prescribed for openings in fire separation walls or partitions.

Fire Hazard - Any condition or act which increases or may cause an increase in the probability of the occurrence of fire, or which may obstruct, delay, hinder or interfere with fire fighting operations and the safeguarding of life and property.

Fire Lane - The portion of a roadway or public-way that should be kept opened and unobstructed at all times for the expedient operation of fire fighting units.

Fire Protective and Fire Safety Device - Any device intended for the protection of buildings or persons to include, but not limited to, built-in protection system such as sprinklers and other automatic extinguishing system, detectors for heat, smoke and combustion products and other warning system components, personal protective equipment such as fire blankets, helmets, fire suits, gloves and other garments that may be put on or worn by persons to protect themselves during fire.

Fire Safety Constructions - Refers to design and installation of walls, barriers, doors, windows, vents, means of egress etc. integral to and incorporated into a building or structure in order to minimize danger to life from fire, smoke, fumes or panic before the building is evacuated. These features are also designed to achieve, among others, safe and rapid evacuation of people through means of egress on construction which are sealed from smoke or fire, the confinement of fire or smoke in the room or floor of origin and delay their spread to other parts of the building by means of smoke sealed and fire resistant doors, walls and floors. It shall also mean to include the treatment of buildings components or contents with flame retardant chemicals.

Flash Point - The minimum temperature at which any material gives off vapor in sufficient concentration to form an ignitable mixture with air.

Forcing - A process where a piece of metal is heated prior to changing its shape or dimensions.

Fulminate - A kind of stable explosive compound which explodes by percussion.

Hazardous Operation/Process - Any act of manufacturing, fabrication, conversion, etc., that uses or produces materials which are likely to cause fires or explosions.

Horizontal Exit - Passageway from one building to another or through or around a wall in approximately the same floor level.

Hose Box - A box or cabinet where fire hoses, valves and other equipment are stored and arranged for fire fighting.

Hose Reel - A cylindrical device turning on an axis around which a fire hose is wound and connected.

Hypergolic Fuel - A rocket or liquid propellant which consist of combinations of fuels and oxidizers which ignite spontaneously on contact with each other.

Industrial baking and Drying - The industrial process of subjecting materials to heat for the purpose of removing solvents or moisture from the same, and/or to fuse certain chemical salts to form a uniform glazing on the surface of materials being treated.

Jumper - A piece of metal or an electrical conductor used to bypass a safety device in an electrical system.

Occupancy - The purpose for which a building or portion thereof is used or intended to be used.

Occupant - Any person actually occupying and using a building or portions thereof by virtue of a lease contract with the owner or administrator or by permission or sufferance of the latter.

Organic Peroxide - A strong oxidizing organic compound which releases oxygen readily. It causes fire when in contact with combustible materials especially under conditions of high temperature.

Overloading - The use of one or more electrical appliances or devices which draw or consume electrical current beyond the designed capacity of the existing electrical system.

Owner - The person who holds the legal right of possession or title to a building or real property.

Oxidizing Material - A material that readily yields oxygen in quantities sufficient to stimulate or support combustion.

Pressurized or Forced Draft Burning Equipment - Type of burner where the fuel is subjected to pressure prior to discharge into the combustion chamber and/or which includes fans or other provisions for the introduction of air at above normal atmospheric pressure into the same combustion chamber.

Public Assembly Building - Any building or structure where fifty (50) or more people congregate, gather, or assemble for any purpose.

Public Way - Any street, alley or other strip of land unobstructed from the ground to the sky, deeded, dedicated or otherwise permanently appropriated for public use.

Pyrophoric - Descriptive of any substance that ignites spontaneously when exposed to air.

Refining - A process where impurities and/or deleterious materials are removed from a mixture in order to produce a pure element or compound. It shall also refer to partial distillation and electrolysis.

Self-closing Doors - Automatic closing doors that are designed to confine smoke and heat and delay the spread of fire.

Smelting - Melting or fusing of metallic ores or compounds so as to separate impurities from pure metals.

Sprinkler System - An integrated network of hydraulically designed piping installed in a building, structure or area with outlets arranged in a systematic pattern which automatically discharges water when activated by heat or combustion products from a fire.

Standpipe System - A system of vertical pipes in a building to which fire hoses can be attached on each floor, including a system by which water is made available to the outlets as needed.

Vestibule - A passage hall or antechamber between the outer doors and the interior

parts of a house or building.

Vertical Shaft - An enclosed vertical space of passage that extends from floor to floor, as well as from the base to the top of the building.

SEC. 4. *Applicability of the Code.* - The provisions of the Fire Code shall apply to all persons and all private and public buildings, facilities or structures erected or constructed before and after its effectivity.

SEC. 5. *Responsibility for the Enforcement of this Code.* - This Code shall be administered and enforced by the Bureau of Fire Protection ((BFP), under the direct supervision and control of the Chief of the Bureau of Fire Protection, through the hierarchy of organization as provided for in Chapter VI of Republic Act No. 6975. With the approval of the Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Chief, BFP, is hereby authorized to:

- a. Issue implementing rules and regulations, and prescribe standards, schedules of fees/fire service charges and administrative penalties therefor as provided in the pertinent provisions of this Code;
- b. Reorganize the BFP as may be necessary and appropriate;
- c. Support and assist fire volunteers, practitioners and fire volunteer organizations in the country who shall undergo mandatory fire suppression, inspection, rescue, emergency medical services and related emergency response trainings and competency evaluations to be conducted by the BFP. In the case of the fire practitioners, they shall undergo mandatory continuous professional education and competency evaluation of their expertise, knowledge and skills in the area of fire science, engineering and technology to be conducted by the BFP.

The BFP may enter into external party agreements for the conduct of trainings, education and evaluation of fire volunteers, practitioners and fire volunteer organizations, which shall be under the full control and supervision of the BFP: *Provided, however,* That during firefighting operations, fire volunteer organizations shall be under the direct operational control of the fire ground commanders of the BFP;

- d. Enter into long term agreement, either through public biddings or negotiations in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act of 2003, for the acquisition of fire prevention, fire protection and fire fighting investigation, rescue, paramedics, hazardous material handling equipment, supplies, materials and related technical services necessary for the fire service;
- e. Enter into Memoranda of Agreement with other departments, bureaus, agencies, offices and corporations of the government, as well as private institutions, in order to define areas of cooperation and coordination and delineate responsibility on fire prevention education, fire safety, fire prevention, fire suppression and other matters of common concern;