

Fire Drills for Schools

Published by the Office of the Fire Commissioner, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
PO Box 9491 Stn Prov Govt., Victoria, British Columbia V8W 9N7
Telephone (250) 356-9000 Fax (250) 356-9019 E-mail: OFC@gov.bc.ca

No. 00-03

Requirements

Section 31(h) of the *Fire Services Act* requires that a system of fire drills approved by the Fire Commissioner, be adopted and practised by all persons in every school, child care facility, children's home, or other institution for the education or care of children.

For schools attended by children, the Fire Commissioner has approved a fire drill system that consists of total evacuation fire drills held at least three times in each of the fall and spring school terms.

Subsection 2.8.2 of the British Columbia Fire Code requires that a fire safety plan be prepared in cooperation with the fire department and any other applicable regulatory authorities. A fire safety plan must include the requirement for a regular system of fire drills. (For further information on fire safety plans see the Office of the Fire Commissioner - *Sample Fire Safety Plan, revised May, 1999*).

It is recommended that the local fire chief be contacted for any assistance necessary in organizing fire drills or designing a system to meet any special needs.

Responsibilities

The principal or person in charge of the school shall instruct all staff members in the fire drill procedure. The person in charge shall also ensure that all staff members have a copy of the fire drill procedure in their possession.

Each teacher, as directed by the principal or person in charge, shall instruct the students in the approved fire drill procedure and also make provision for the special care of any students who may be physically or mentally incapable of proceeding to the exits.

Any teacher who leaves a class unattended, must notify the person in charge of the nearest classroom, who will then become responsible for the unattended class and will be required to take charge of both classes in the event of a fire alarm.

A teacher may appoint one or more students from the class to act as monitors in the event of a fire alarm. These monitors shall check to ensure that no children remain in the classroom or cloakroom or any part thereof. Upon completion of this check, the monitors shall report to the teacher and then take their places with the rest of the class.

The principal, or person in charge of the school, shall have all corridors and stairs checked daily to ascertain that doors are free to open and that no obstructions exist.

The principal or person in charge shall ensure that the fire department is notified immediately when a fire alarm occurs. The emergency telephone number for the fire department shall be prominently displayed near all telephones in the school.

(See overleaf for *Fire Alarm Procedure*.)

FIRE ALARM PROCEDURE

The following procedure has been approved by the Fire Commissioner:

- 1. When the fire alarm is given, the teacher shall give the warning Fire Drill. All instructions and activity shall cease, machinery should be shut down, gas-and-oil-burning apparatus and appliances other than those used for heating the building should be shut off, and the students should remain still and quiet to await further orders.**
- 2. The teacher shall give the command STAND. Students should stand and remain silent. The teacher shall then take the class register or such other record of attendance as may be available and keep possession of it until the end of the drill.**
- 3. The teacher will open the classroom door, determine the route to be taken, and give the command MARCH. The teacher will then supervise the class out of the building in an orderly manner, to a predetermined point of safety. Students will remain in formation until dismissed by the principal or person in charge.**
- 4. Students outside the classroom and still in the building shall go to the nearest corridor and join with any class or, if close to an exit, shall leave the building and report to their particular class outside the building.**
- 5. Once assembled at the predetermined point of safety, the teacher shall check the names and the number of students. If there are any missing or additional students, the teacher shall report this to either the principal or person in charge, giving the names, the classroom numbers and the location.**
- 6. The principal or person in charge shall make every effort to ensure that no student remains in the school.**

Your Fire Department Telephone Number is.....