



INFORMATION BULLETIN

Office of the
Fire Commissioner

Issue Date: June 15, 1996

No. IN 002

Retail Propane Refuelling Stations - Gas Safety Branch Directive #23

This bulletin is intended to clarify the fire department's role in the application of Directive 23 to new or modified Propane Refuelling Stations. The procedures have been accepted by the Provincial Propane Safety SubCommittee.

While the official control of propane installations and handling of propane is the responsibility of the Provincial Gas Safety Branch, Directive 23 establishes that it is the fire department's role to classify the site where a new refuelling station is proposed or where an existing installation is being modified. Sites surrounding existing refuelling stations should only be re-classified by the fire department if there has been a significant change in occupancy type and population density.

Propane Company

The propane company should prepare the paperwork and acquire zoning approvals from the local government zoning authority. The company should supply the fire department with a scaled site plan showing the following:

1. property lines
2. buildings on subject and adjacent properties
3. hydrants
4. streets and access lanes
5. proposed refuelling station and tank (including size and style of tank)
6. the 100m radius should be shown around the proposed tank
7. zoning approval from the planning department

Note: Local government building or planning departments usually have zoning maps available to the public that are to-scale and which usually show items 1 to 4. The propane company should add items 5 to 7.

Fire Department

The fire department should attend the proposed site to confirm the accuracy of the plan and determine the occupant loads within the 100m radius of the proposed tank. [Article 1.1 of Directive 23 states that only the portion of the building or population within this radius shall be included.] When determining the occupant load as per Directive 23, the department should use three (3) persons per dwelling unit, the posted limits for licensed premises, and Subsection 3.1.16 of the BC Building Code for the other remaining occupancy types. Then, using Table D-C-23 of Directive 23, the classification of the proposed or existing location should be determined. A letter is then required to be drafted to the propane company, with copies to the Gas Safety Branch, the local government building department and the property owner, advising of the site's classification.

Included with this bulletin is a copy of a checklist to assist fire departments in addressing the items required to be considered. With this checklist, a metric measure wheel or other form of measuring device and the most current copy of Directive 23, classifying locations should be straightforward.

Any disagreements on the final classification between the propane company and the fire department will be. For further information contact the Provincial Gas Safety Branch.

The contents of this Information Bulletin are not intended to be provided as legal advice and should not be relied upon as legal advice.

Information Bulletins are distributed to British Columbia Fire Departments, Local Assistants to the Fire Commissioner and where applicable, other related agencies and authorities, in order to provide general information on fire-related issues.

For further information contact: Office of the Fire Commissioner, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General,
Mailing Address: PO Box 9491, Stn. Prov. Govt., Victoria B.C. V8W 9N7 / Location: Suite 200, 645 Tyee Road
Telephone (250) 356-9000, Facsimile (250) 356-9019, E-mail: ofc@gov.bc.ca, Internet: <http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/firecom/>