

SECTION .0900 – PUBLIC PROTECTION CLASSIFICATIONS FOR FIRE DISTRICTS

11 NCAC 05A .0901 DEFINITIONS

As used in this Subchapter:

- (1) "9S Inspection" means an inspection conducted by the Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) to ensure compliance with the requirements of this Section in order to receive a public protection classification rating.
- (2) "Automatic Aid" means assistance dispatched automatically by contractual agreement between two communities or fire districts to all structure fires.
- (3) "Eligible Firefighter" means all persons 18 years of age or older who are firefighters as defined by G.S. 58-86-2.
- (4) "Engine" means a motorized vehicle meeting the requirements of NFPA 1901, "Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus."
- (5) "Fire Department" means an organization established or organized under applicable State and local laws, for the purpose of limiting, reducing, or preventing damage or personal injury caused by fire or other emergency.
- (6) "Fire Districts" or "Insurance Districts" means an area within a city, town, municipality, or county that is established in order to provide fire prevention and fire suppression services.
- (7) "Fire Station" means a building for housing a certified engine and personnel.
- (8) "Gallons Per Minute" or "GPM" means the volume of water flow from a hose, hydrant, or other fire suppression apparatus.
- (9) "Insurance Services Office" or "ISO" means the Insurance Services Office, Inc.
- (10) "North Carolina Fire Suppression Rating Schedule" or "NCFSRS" means the current edition of the ISO Fire Suppression Rating Schedule.
- (11) "Pounds Per Square Inch" or "PSI" means the pressure a gas or liquid exerts on the walls of its container.
- (12) "Public Protection Classification" or "PPC" means a rating given to fire districts or insurance districts throughout the State on their ability to provide fire prevention and fire suppression services to affected areas within its jurisdictional boundaries.
- (13) "Response District" means an area within a city, town, or municipality to which a fire department responds in order to provide fire prevention and fire suppression services.
- (14) "Road Miles" are the miles that a fire apparatus will travel from a fire station to an emergency scene.
- (15) "Rural Fire District" means a fire district that is outside the jurisdictional boundaries of a city, town, or municipality and is established pursuant to Chapter 69, Article 3A or Chapter 153A, Article 11 of the General Statutes.
- (16) "Structure Fire" means a condition where an actual monetary loss or physical damage has occurred to a building or constructed area due to the result of a fire.
- (17) "Tanker" means an apparatus designed to carry water to fires, whether equipped with or without a pump to dispense the water.

History Note: Authority G.S. 58-78A-1(b)(20); 58-78A-2; 58-36-10; 58-40-25;
Eff. January 1, 2018;
Amended Eff. June 1, 2026.

(a) This Section establishes standards for insurance public protection classifications for fire districts throughout the State.

(b) Fire districts in all rural areas of the State and in cities with populations of 100,000 or fewer according to the most recent annual population estimates certified by the State Budget Officer shall be inspected by OSFM in accordance with the requirements of this Section. All other fire districts in the State shall be inspected by the Insurance Services Office in accordance with this Section.

(c) A "PPC 1" is the best rating, and a "PPC 10" indicates that the fire district does not meet the minimum protection requirements.

(d) A fire district that meets the certification requirements set forth in this Section shall be given a public protection classification of "PPC 9S."

(e) A fire district that meets the certification requirements set forth in this Section, but contains properties within its jurisdictional limits that are more than five but within six road miles from a responding fire station, shall be given a public protection classification rating of "PPC 9E."

(f) If a fire district contains some properties within its jurisdictional limits that meet the requirements of a certain PPC rating, and some properties within its jurisdictional limits that meet the requirements of another PPC rating, the fire district may receive a split rating.

(g) To receive a public protection classification better than a "PPC 9S," a fire district must meet the requirements of this Section and the North Carolina Fire Suppression Rating Schedule.

History Note: Authority G.S. 58-36-10; 58-40-25; 58-78A-1(b)(20); 58-78A-2;
Eff. January 1, 2018;
Amended Eff. June 1, 2026.

11 NCAC 05A .0903 RATING OF FIRE DISTRICTS

(a) To receive a PPC rating, a fire department shall submit a written request to OSFM containing the following information:

- (1) The name of the fire district;
- (2) The name of the entity that operates the fire district. Note: as an example, the city, town, county, or non-profit corporation;
- (3) The name of the person in charge of the entity that operates the fire district. Note: as an example, the president of the board of directors of the fire district, county manager, or city manager;
- (4) The name and title of the Fire Chief;
- (5) The physical address of the location of every fire station utilized by the fire department;
- (6) The mailing address of the fire department;
- (7) The Federal (FEIN) Tax ID number of the fire department;
- (8) Copies of any contracts with a local government body to provide fire protection; and
- (9) A Geographic Information System ("GIS") computer-generated map of the fire district, and documentation of the approval of the map by the local governing body if applicable.

(b) A fire department may contract with more than one unit of government to provide fire protection. In addition, a local unit of government may contract with more than one fire department to provide fire protection.

(c) 9S Re-Inspections. Fire departments shall be re-inspected by OSFM at least every **seven years** and shall be notified by OSFM of such 9S re-inspection in writing at least 30 days in advance. In addition, upon receipt of information alleging noncompliance with this Section that is reviewed and verified by OSFM, OSFM shall perform unannounced re-inspections of fire departments.

(d) New Station Inspection. A fire department may request a certification inspection for any additional station that the fire department seeks to include in the rating of its fire district. Before OSFM will conduct the inspection, the fire department must provide the following:

- (1) Proof of Certificate of Occupancy; and
- (2) If the fire department is adding to their rated insurance district with an additional station or making any changes to the response district lines, new maps and approvals in accordance with Subparagraph (a)(9) of this Rule.

(e) Merging of fire departments. When two or more fire departments merge into one fire department, OSFM shall conduct a 9S inspection. Before the inspection will be conducted, the fire departments must provide to OSFM the information required by Paragraph (a) of this Rule.

(f) Unless otherwise approved pursuant to Paragraph (g) of this Rule, a fire district may not extend more than five road miles from a responding fire station.

(g) A rural fire district may extend its boundaries to more than five but within six road miles from a responding fire department if the fire department enters a written automatic aid contract with another jurisdiction that requires the responding party to respond with at least one piece of fire apparatus capable of carrying at least 1,000 gallons of water and the extension is approved by the board of county commissioners of the county to which the rural fire district is extended.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 58-36-10; 58-40-25; 58-78A-1(b)(20); 58-78A-2; 58-83-1;
Eff. January 1, 2018;
Amended Eff. June 1, 2026.*

11 NCAC 05A .0904 FACILITIES

A fire department shall have heating for all-weather protection of apparatus at every fire station.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 58-36-10; 58-40-25; 58-78A-1(b)(20); 58-78A-2;
Eff. January 1, 2018;
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11 NCAC 05A .0905 APPARATUS SPECIFICATIONS AND EQUIPMENT

(a) Engines. All stations shall have at least one engine that:

- (1) Is constructed in accordance with NFPA 1901;
- (2) Annually undergoes a fire pump performance test, as identified in NFPA 1911. If the engine was purchased within the previous 12 months, the certification required by Part (a)(3)(A) of this Rule shall satisfy this requirement; and
- (3) Is equipped with the following:
 - (A) A pump certified by an independent third-party certification organization that is accredited for inspection and testing systems on fire apparatus in accordance with NFPA 1901.
 - (B) A pump rated at not less than 750 GPM at 150 PSI net pump pressure.
 - (C) A tank with at least a 300-gallon capacity.
 - (D) Two 200-foot pre-connected hose lines, with a diameter of 1 ½ inches, 1 ¾ inches, or 2 inches, with nozzles that have a minimum flow of 95 GPM.
 - (E) At least 20 feet of hard-suction hose in a size to flow the capacity of the engine, or at least 15 feet of soft-suction hose with a diameter of at least four inches.
 - (F) Four self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). To the extent practicable, SCBAs shall comply with NFPA 1981.
 - (G) Four spare SCBA cylinders.
 - (H) One roof ladder at least 12 feet long.
 - (I) One extension ladder at least 24 feet long.
 - (J) One folding ladder.
 - (K) One pike-head axe.
 - (L) One flat-head axe.
 - (M) One forcible entry tool.
 - (N) One pike pole or plaster hook at least 6 feet long.
 - (O) Two portable, rechargeable hand lights in accordance with NFPA 70.
 - (P) 100 feet of utility rope, at least ½ inch in diameter.
 - (Q) Two 20-pound, class BC portable extinguishers.
 - (R) One 2½-gallon water extinguisher.
 - (S) One first aid kit.
 - (T) One bolt cutter at least 14 inches long.
 - (U) One two-way radio assigned to the apparatus.
 - (V) One traffic vest for each riding position or a minimum of two traffic vests if the fire department has issued a traffic vest to all members.

(b) Tankers. If a station has a tanker, the tanker shall:

- (1) Be equipped with at least 1,000 gallons of water.
- (2) Be equipped with hoses and equipment for filling the tank and transferring water to the engine.
- (3) Be properly baffled in accordance with NFPA 1901.
- (4) Be equipped with one traffic vest for each riding position or a minimum of two traffic vests if the fire department has issued a traffic vest to all members.

(c) Protective Clothing. Each eligible firefighter shall be provided protective clothing. Protective clothing provided to eligible firefighters should, to the extent practicable, comply with the requirements of NFPA 1851 and shall include the following:

- (1) Helmet.
- (2) Coat.
- (3) Pants.
- (4) Boots.
- (5) Gloves.
- (6) Hoods.

(d) Fire departments shall ensure that all apparatus are registered with the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles and insured.

(e) All NFPA standards referenced in this Section are hereby incorporated by reference, including subsequent amendments and editions. Copies of these standards may be viewed online for free at the National Fire Protection Association website at <http://www.nfpa.org>.

History Note: Authority G.S. 58-36-10; 58-40-25; 58-78A-1(b)(20); 58-78A-2;
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11 NCAC 05A .0906 STAFFING LEVELS

(a) Fire Station.

- (1) Each fire department shall maintain a minimum of 15 eligible firefighters on its roster.
- (2) Each fire department shall provide a roster containing the names and date of birth of all eligible firefighters. A report submitted to the North Carolina State Firefighters' Association pursuant to G.S. 58-86-25 constitutes compliance with this Subparagraph.
- (3) Each fire department shall provide current workers compensation insurance certifications for all of its eligible firefighters.
- (4) Firefighters under the age of 18 will not be counted for purposes of meeting the requirements of this Rule.

(b) Additional Fire Stations: Fire departments that operate more than one station shall have four additional personnel for each additional station.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 58-2-30; 58-36-10; 58-40-25; S.L. 2017-167;
Eff. January 1, 2018.*

11 NCAC 05A .0907 TRAINING

- (a) Eligible firefighters shall have attended at least 36 hours of training in the previous 12 months in the area of fire prevention, fire suppression, or protection of life and property. No more than 12 hours of emergency medical services training may be counted toward the 36-hour training requirement.
- (b) Fire departments shall provide a total of 48 hours of training per year.**
- (c) Within one year of appointment, the fire chief of each fire department shall complete a class on management of fire department operations and records approved by the State Fire and Rescue Commission.
- (d) Fire departments shall maintain training records in accordance with 11 NCAC 05A .0911.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 58-36-10; 58-40-25; 58-78A-1(b)(20); 58-78A-2;
Eff. January 1, 2018;
Amended Eff. June 1, 2026.*

11 NCAC 05A .0908 COMMUNICATIONS AND ALARMS

(a) Fire departments shall utilize a Public Service Answering Point (PSAP) established pursuant to NCFRS Section 107 D, to receive 911 calls and dispatching, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

(b) Notification to firefighters of emergencies may be provided by pagers, portable radios with alerting capabilities, or station alerting devices with paid personnel. Text paging or phone paging by a third party shall not be an acceptable means of notification, unless the paging system is owned by the authority having jurisdiction.

(c) In jurisdictions utilizing Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) systems, the fire department that is responsible for the fire district shall be dispatched, along with the closest unit recommendation of the AVL systems. In accordance with 11 NCAC 05A .0903(g), if a jurisdiction is utilizing AVL for unit dispatch in a six-mile district, it shall ensure that an apparatus with a minimum of 1,000 gallons of water is dispatched as required by the automatic aid protocols.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 58-36-10; 58-40-25; 58-78A-1(b)(20); 58-78A-2;
Eff. January 1, 2018;
Amended Eff. June 1, 2026.*

11 NCAC 05A .0909 RESPONSE TO STRUCTURE FIRES

- (a) Each fire department shall ensure the response of at least four of its eligible firefighters and one engine to all structure fires. The fire chief may be one of the four responding members.
- (b) The fire department responding to a structure fire shall have a plan to provide a minimum flow of 200 GPM for 20 minutes within five minutes of the first arriving engine.

History Note: Authority G.S. 58-2-40; 58-36-10; 58-40-25;
Eff. January 1, 2018.

11 NCAC 05A .0910 INCIDENT REPORTING

(a) In addition to the requirements of this Rule regarding reporting the storage and deployment of Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF), when a fire department responds to an incident, the fire chief shall ensure that an incident report containing the date, time, and location of the incident is completed using software compatible with the records management system maintained by OSFM.

(b) All reports shall be submitted to OSFM as soon as practicable. Incident reports shall not be submitted to OSFM later than 90 days from incident occurrence.

(c) When a fire department responds to a fire involving fatalities, an initial report shall be filed by the fire chief or fire marshal of the authority having jurisdiction within 48 hours of the incident to OSFM.

(d) In accordance with G.S. 58-82B-10, an online reporting portal for the storage and deployment of AFFF has been created at the following website: <https://ncdoi.imagetrendelite.com/Elite/Organizationncdoi/>. This online reporting portal consists of an online database and an online reporting tool to capture the storage and deployment of AFFF.

(e) The fire chief or fire marshal of the authority having jurisdiction shall ensure that the following information regarding AFFF inventory for their fire department is entered into the online database:

- (1) The number of trucks at each department that carry AFFF, and the fire station or other location, including street address, where each truck is located.
- (2) The volume, trade name, and Chemical Abstract Service (CAS) number of the AFFF on each truck.
- (3) An inventory, including the volume, trade name, and CAS number of AFFF stored by each fire department at a fire station or other location, including the street address where the AFFF is stored.
- (4) The volume, trade name, and CAS number of AFFF products that are no longer utilized and could be removed from inventory for disposal, including the street address where the AFFF is stored.
- (5) A photograph of the label and the container of the AFFF. For the purpose of this Subparagraph, a photograph includes an electronic image produced by the camera of an electronic device. The information entered in the online database shall be updated annually in accordance with G.S. 58-82B-5.

(f) When a fire department responds to a fire, conducts training involving AFFF in any quantity, or has an accidental spill, the fire chief shall ensure an initial report is entered in the online reporting tool within 15 days of the incident or the training event, including the following:

- (1) The date, time, and location, including street address and GPS coordinates, where AFFF was involved, the trade name, and CAS number of the AFFF used.
- (2) The total volume of AFFF involved, including gallons of foam and gallons of water and total concentration of foam.
- (3) The reason for the deployment of AFFF, such as firefighting, fire prevention, other emergency response actions intended to protect property or public safety, training, or an accidental spill.

(g) The fire chief or fire marshal of the authority having jurisdiction shall ensure that an annual report is available in the online reporting tool by July 1st of each year that includes the information required by Paragraph (g) of this Rule.

History Note: Authority G.S. 58-36-10; 58-40-25; 58-78A-1(b)(20); 58-78A-2; 58-79-1; 58-79-45; 58-82B-5; 58-82B-10; S.L. 2021-180, s. 8.10(i);
Eff. January 1, 2018;
Amended Eff. June 1, 2026; June 1, 2023.

11 NCAC 05A .0911 RECORDS

(a) A fire department shall maintain the following records for 36 months for inspection by OSFM:

- (1) Apparatus maintenance logs and equipment inventory for in service engines and tankers. A fire department shall inspect all in service engine and tanker equipment inventory monthly and document the inspection.
- (2) Fire pump performance tests. A fire department shall perform a fire pump performance test on at least one engine annually, in accordance with NFPA 1911. If the engine was purchased within the previous 12 months, the certification required by Part (a)(3)(A) of 11 NCAC 05A .0905 shall satisfy the requirement.
- (3) Training records for all eligible firefighters. Training records shall include the dates, topics, hours, and personnel in attendance.
- (4) The AFFF inventory and usage reports created in accordance with 11 NCAC 05A .0910.
- (5) Records evidencing monthly functional testing of the components of the fire department's self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA).
- (6) Evidence of completion of criminal history record checks for each applicant over the age of 18, in accordance with G.S. 143B-1209.24.

(b) A fire department shall maintain incident reports related to response to structure fires for a minimum of five years in accordance with 11 NCAC 05A .0910.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 58-36-10; 58-40-25; 58-78A-1(b)(20); 58-78A-2; 58-82B-5; 58-82B-10;
Eff. January 1, 2018;
Amended Eff. June 1, 2026; June 1, 2023.*

11 NCAC 05A .0912 NON-COMPLIANCE

(a) Upon completion of an inspection, the OSFM representative will review the inspection results with the fire chief or the chief's designee. Any fire department that fails to meet any of the standards set forth in this Section shall be considered non-compliant for the purpose of determining Fire Insurance District Rating Classifications.

(b) A non-compliant fire department shall have a period of **15 days** from the date of the inspection to submit a written corrective action plan to OSFM. The corrective action plan shall address each deficiency found in the inspection and the corrective action the fire department will take in response to the deficiency. If a non-compliant fire department fails to provide a written corrective action plan to OSFM within 15 days from the date of the inspection, OSFM shall consult with the governing body that contracts for the fire district and place the fire department on probation until the fire department provides the written corrective action plan to OSFM, for a period not to exceed three months. If the fire department fails to provide the written corrective action plan to OSFM by the end of the three-month probation period, OSFM shall designate the fire department as "PPC10" (non-certified).

(c) Upon receipt of approval of the corrective action plan from OSFM, the fire department shall have three months to become compliant. If the fire department remains non-compliant after the expiration of the three-month corrective action period, OSFM shall consult with the governing body that contracts for the fire district and place the fire department on probation until the fire department becomes compliant, for a period not to exceed six months. Upon completion of the probationary period, OSFM shall re-inspect the fire department for compliance. If the fire department remains non-compliant, OSFM shall designate the fire department as a "PPC10" (non-certified).

(d) Notwithstanding the provisions of Paragraph (c) of this Rule, a non-compliant fire department that is determined to be non-compliant based on its failure to ensure four eligible firefighters respond to all structure fires shall have a period of 15 days from the date of inspection to submit a written action plan to OSFM and six months from the date of providing the written corrective action plan to OSFM to become compliant. If no structure fires occur in the fire department's fire district within the six-month period following submission of a written corrective action plan to OSFM, OSFM shall re-inspect the fire department for compliance after an additional six months.

History Note: Authority G.S. 58-36-10; 58-40-25; 58-78A-1(b)(20); 58-78A-2;
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