Report of Committee on
Fire Brigades and Guard Services

R. H. Yapp (SFPE), Chairman,
Automotive Assembly Div., Ford Motor Co., P. O. Box 187, Dearborn, Mich. 48121

A. H. Cole (SFPE), Reed, Shaw & McNaught, Montreal, P.Q., Canada.
Kenneth E. Goodell, General Motors Corp., GMC Truck & Coach Division, Pontiac, Mich.
Paul C. Lamb (SFPE), Lever Brothers Co., New York.
Wm. C. Linn, Pinkerton's, Inc., New York.
W. J. Orey (SFPE), St. Regis Paper Co., New York.
Fred Querin, Factory Mutual Engineering Corporation, Atlanta, Ga.

SCOPE: Organization, equipment and operations of private fire brigades; guard service.

Proposed Revision of
Suggestions for the Organization, Training and Equipment of
PRIVATE FIRE BRIGADES

NFPA NO. 27—1955


Authority to the NFPA staff is given by this recommendation to update references to publications in a 1967 edition of No. 27, including references to NFPA standards and reports published in 1967 editions as a result of action at the 1967 Annual Meeting.

This report has been submitted to letter ballot of the Committee, which consists of 12 members, all of whom have voted affirmatively.
Recommendations for Organization, Training and Equipment of PRIVATE FIRE BRIGADES
NFPA NO. 27—1967

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10. ORGANIZATION

11. Nature of Organization. Every property should provide an organization to deal with fires and related emergencies when they occur. The manager of the property should evaluate the potential magnitude of a fire emergency within the property or of an exposure fire and the availability of fire fighting assistance from a public fire department to determine the nature of the organization to be provided in the property.

See Recommendations for Management Control of Fire Emergencies, NFPA No. 7—1964.

12. The Fire Brigade or Brigades. In its most simple form, this organization would consist of the manager of the property assisted by selected personnel. In properties where more persons are available, they should be organized as a team, or teams, to function as a private fire brigade. The availability of fire fighting assistance from a public fire department or a private fire department may affect the nature of private fire brigade organization. These do not necessarily take the place of a private fire brigade in parts of a large property. Individual fire brigades may respond to alarms in all areas of a property, or each geographical or functional area may have a separate fire brigade organization according to the needs of the property. The organization should be such that a fire brigade is on duty on each working shift and at periods when the plant is shut down.

13. Components. The equipment that must be put into service at a fire will determine the number of men required for each operating unit or company into which the brigade is organized and the total number of men needed in the brigade. Operating units or companies may be composed of two or more men to operate a specific item of equipment or a larger group to perform more complicated operations. Each company should have a leader and each brigade should have a chief.
20. FIRE BRIGADE CHIEFS

21. Fire Loss Prevention Management. The property manager should be accountable for prevention of fire loss. Where he does not himself perform them, he should assign a fire loss prevention staff man to perform the duties directly associated with the manager’s responsibility for loss prevention.

From the duties enumerated following for each, note that the functions of the fire loss prevention staff man and the duties of the chief of a fire brigade are not the same. For additional information see Recommendations for Organization of Industrial Fire Loss Prevention. NFPA No. 6—1964.

22. Management Decisions on Brigades. The fire loss prevention staff man, acting for the manager, or the manager himself, should

(a) provide equipment and supplies for the fire brigade or brigades,

(b) establish the size and organizational structure of the fire brigades,

(c) see that the brigades are suitably staffed and trained, and

(d) select the fire brigade chiefs.

23. Abilities of Fire Brigade Chiefs. Fire brigade chiefs should have administrative and supervisory abilities.

24. Duties of Fire Brigade Chiefs. A fire brigade chief should have duties including the following:

(a) Periodic evaluation of the equipment provided for fire fighting. He should be responsible for setting in motion necessary procedures for replacing missing equipment or correction of inoperative equipment. He should also call to the immediate attention of the manager, or his fire loss prevention staff man, any situation likely to reduce the effectiveness of fire fighting operations.

(b) Provision of plans of action to meet possible fire situations in the plant, subject to approval of the manager and the fire loss prevention staff man.

(c) Periodic review of the brigade roster and preparation of recommendations that additional members be selected, appointed and made available to keep up the roster.

(d) Preparing the plan for training members of the brigade and other employees.
25. Assistant Chiefs. Enough assistant chiefs should be appointed to cover the chief's position around the clock. Their rank, one to another and to the chiefs, should be established to provide for succession in event of absence.

30. PERSONNEL

31. Membership of Brigade. Members of the fire brigade should consist of persons who have met qualifications appropriate for fire brigade work at the particular property. Its membership should consist of the necessary personnel for fire fighting teams and include certain operating and maintenance personnel. The property manager should identify the persons who have to perform duties to assist brigade members in emergency by reason of their normal responsibilities and decide which ones should be assigned these functions (electricians are an example).

32. Availability of Personnel. To qualify as a member of the fire brigade, individuals should be available to answer alarms and to attend required training sessions. A prearranged schedule for availability should be established to prevent conflict of duties and to cover absences such as regular off-duty periods, vacations and sickness.

33. Physical Requirements. Minimum physical requirements should be established. A periodic physical examination is desirable.

34. Identification. Members of the brigade should be given some appropriate identification (a card or badge, for example) for a number of purposes. These include assistance in reaching the plant in an emergency and identification by plant guards for movement within the plant or parts of it where fire brigade duties have to be performed.

40. TRAINING

41. Training Schedule. A schedule of training should be established for members of the brigade. Members should be required to complete a specified program of instruction as a condition to membership in the brigade. Training sessions should be held at least monthly.

42. Scope of Training. All members of the brigade, regardless of the fire fighting team or company to which they belong, should be trained. They should be instructed in the handling of any and
all of the fire and rescue apparatus provided. The training program should be adapted to the purpose of the particular brigade. It should include fire fighting with portable fire extinguishers, the use of hose lines, ventilation of buildings, salvage operations, and performing related rescue operations.

43. Updating of Training Programs. The training program should keep up with problems presented by new fire hazards in the property and new fire extinguishing equipment and methods provided for its protection.

44. Assistance in Training Programs. Assistance in setting up and training the fire brigade can be obtained from outside agencies. Among these are the municipal fire departments, state fire schools, state educational extension services, state fire marshals' departments, state insurance inspection bureaus, colleges and others, where fire service training is given. Members of the brigade should be afforded opportunities to improve their knowledge of fire fighting and fire prevention through attendance at meetings and special training classes where available.

45. Training Facilities. Where the number of men participating in the fire brigade training program warrants such arrangement, a special space or room in the property for fire brigade use should be available for that part of a training program requiring lectures or classroom instruction. Training aids such as books, literature and films should be kept at such a location when one is provided.

The provision of a space or room for members of the brigade is one way in which membership in the brigade can be made attractive to individuals needed for such service.

50. DRILLS

51. Drills to Provide Practice. Practice drills should be held to check the ability of members to perform the operations they are expected to carry out with the fire equipment provided. Drills should occasionally be held under adverse weather conditions to work out special procedures needed under these conditions.

See 70. Equipment.

52. Operation of Equipment. In drills, equipment should be operated whenever possible. For example, portable extinguishers should be actually discharged, respiratory protective equipment should be operated and water should be turned into hose lines.
53. Control of Drills. Practice drills should always be carried out under the control of the chief and leaders of companies at a moderate pace with emphasis on effectiveness rather than speed.

This is to assure proper technique and safe operation as required at a fire.

54. Reactivation of Equipment. At the conclusion of practice drill, equipment should be promptly placed in readiness to respond to a fire call.

60. INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE

61. Scheduled Work. Certain duties in the periodic inspection and maintenance of plant fire equipment, both fixed and portable, may be assigned to members of the fire brigade. However, the plant manager or his fire loss prevention manager should establish the necessary schedules for such work and should assign these duties to specific personnel and see that these inspections and maintenance operations are carried out and reports filed with management.

62. Inspection and Service Personnel. Large plants should consider maintaining inspectors who are not necessarily members of the fire brigade to carry on a continuous inspection and service program for fire protection equipment.


70. EQUIPMENT

71. Equipment Check List. The brigade should be provided with equipment and tools of a variety and in such numbers as to enable it to perform the service for which it is organized. This equipment should include items additional to the fixed or portable equipment provided in buildings and yards. Following is a list of the principal categories of equipment which should be considered by the property manager, the fire loss prevention staff man and the fire brigade chief in original equipment for the brigade and its maintenance or replacement.

Portable fire extinguishers.

Hose and hose accessories, including hydrant wrenches, hydrant valves, rope tools or hose straps, rope, combination shutoff nozzles, gated wyes, double female hose couplings, and hose spanners.


Portable lighting equipment, including portable electric generators, hand lanterns and supply of extra batteries.

Forcible entry tools, including axes, saws, plaster hooks and pike poles, claw tools, door openers and crowbars.

Ladders: a selection of ladders of sufficient length for the work required.


Salvage equipment including salvage covers, brooms and squeegees.


Rescue and first-aid equipment. The exact equipment provided should be governed by the extent to which members of the brigade have been trained in its use. It may include first-aid kits and resuscitation equipment (inhalator, resuscitator or modification of these devices with spare cylinders of gas where used).

Spare and replacement equipment. This should include items which it is practical to have members of the fire brigade replace. The exact items should be determined in consideration of their availability otherwise and their relative importance. These items should include fusible links for fire doors and automatic sprinkler heads.

Personnel protective equipment, including helmets, coats, waterproof mittens and rubber boots. Pompier belts or rope tools and respiratory protective equipment may be included depending on the extent to which members are trained in their safe and effective use. The number of each item which should be provided is according to the number of members of the brigade required to use such items of equipment at one time.

Transportation facilities. The brigade should have transportation equipment as needed for its particular work. In some properties small trucks for inside use or motor trucks for outside use may be desirable.

72. Equipment Storage. Storage space for the fire brigade equipment should be provided so that it can be promptly obtained for use and properly maintained.

This may also be a convenient location at which to provide for reference a posted plan of water mains serving the property with all section controls, sprinkler valves, hydrants and fire alarm boxes shown and numbered.

73. List of Available Equipment. The property manager, the fire loss prevention staff man or the fire brigade chief should maintain a list of equipment available in the property which might be useful in fire brigade work but which is not in the custody of the fire brigade. This includes such items as portable lighting equipment, power saws and other cutting tools, portable pumps, air-moving equipment, electric motors for replacement purposes, tarpaulins and roofing material. The list should show where each item of equipment is usually located and the name of the department or person in whose custody it may be found. A list of equipment and service agencies from which equipment or assistance may be needed, together with phone numbers, should be kept up to date.
Appendix

NFPA Standards and Committee Recommendations

Property managers and their fire loss prevention staff men will find occasion to refer to the many publications of the National Fire Protection Association. A list of all publications is available on request. Following is a selected list of the technical standards and committee reports most likely to affect decisions on private fire brigade organization and operation. The list includes items available in separate pamphlet form. Most are included in NFPA National Fire Codes (10 volumes).

NPFA No.


10A. Recommended Good Practice for the Maintenance and Use of Portable Fire Extinguishers. 1966. 32 pages. 60 cents.


13A. Care and Maintenance of Sprinkler Systems. 1958. 20 pages. 50 cents.


72A. Standard for the Installation, Maintenance and Use of Local Protective Signaling Systems for Watchman, Fire Alarm and Supervisory Service. 1964. 38 pages. 60 cents.


72C. Standard for the Installation, Maintenance and Use of Remote Station Protective Signaling Systems for Fire Alarm and Supervisory Service. 1964. 32 pages. 60 cents.

72D. Standard for the Installation, Maintenance and Use of Proprietary Signaling Systems for Watchman, Fire Alarm and Supervisory Service. 1965. 34 pages. 60 cents.


198. Standard for Care of Fire Hose. 1958. 44 pages. 50 cents.

601. Recommended Manual of Instructions and Duties for the Plant Watchman or Guard. 1956. 14 pages. 35 cents.

604. Recommended Practice on Salvaging Operations. 1964. 15 pages. 50 cents.
NFPA Books and Pamphlets

The following is a list of books and pamphlets of special interest as references published by the National Fire Protection Association.

NFPA National Fire Codes, 1966-67. 10 volumes; 6,608 pages, sewed bindings. $4 per volume. $30 per set.

- Vol. 5. Electrical. 544 pages.
- Vol. 10. Transportation. 880 pages.


Firemen’s Training Centers. 1963. 80 pages. $2.50.

Joint Committee on Evolutions, NFPA Committee on Firemen’s Training, International Association of Fire Chiefs and Fire Department Instructors Conference, Handling Hose and Ladders. 1962 reprint. 190 pages, cloth. $3.50