

## REGULATORY GUIDANCE

*Prepared by Ed Lydon, Senior Director of Facilities and Support Services*

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This information is interpretive guidance for your consideration as you strengthen your environment of care and life safety preparedness.

### Competency

On April 5, 2024, the Joint Commission published a [new FAQ](#) on the importance and expectations for defining and assessing competencies for staff responsible for maintaining the physical environment in hospitals.

Although there are no regulatory licensing or certifications for staff responsible for plant operations or facilities services, The Joint Commission now has the expectation that there must be evidence the person(s) in this role understand the building systems and processes that support the physical environment in healthcare.

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This can be met by a combination of formal education, knowledge acquired during employment, or knowledge acquired through prior experience in an adjacent field. The organization's governing body is responsible for all facility operations and is the ultimate responsibility for defining expectations related to competencies (i.e., job descriptions) for all facility staff.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) does require formal certifications for those who perform inspection, testing and maintenance tasks on specific systems; these include:

- Medical gas systems (training and certification or credentialing to the requirements of AASE 6030 or 6040)
- Fire alarm systems
- Fire door maintenance (certification is not required but demonstrated knowledge of the code and operating requirements)

In addition to NFPA requirements, local municipalities may require licensure or certification for maintaining utility components; examples include:

- Boilers / High-pressure vessels
- Fire/Smoke dampers

Organizations must be able to provide evidence that staff or vendors performing these duties possess the necessary skills to carry out these duties competently. Failure to provide evidence

of compliance with this requirement during a survey will result in a requirement for improvement (RFI).

Surveyors will now discuss this expectation at the start of the survey process during the Facility Orientation (0800-0900) so that the organization can provide the job description(s) and HR file illustrating compliance with the job description during the Document Review time frame on day one.

Non-compliance with the requirement for defining competencies for the plant operations engineer or responsible facility staff will be scored at **EC.01.01.01 EP 1 / CoP 482.41(d)(2)**.

## New Facilities Services Competency Checklist

Position	Competency	Notes	Verified by LSCS Y/N	Individual's Initials & Title
Manager / Director	Knowledge of utility equipment/system infrastructure	Experience, formal education LSCS Reviews department leader job description and individual in roles resume\CV to ensure they meet the JD requirements.		
Medical Gas Systems performed in- house or contracted	NFPA 99 Code knowledge NFPA 99 2012 5.1.12.3.1.3	ASSE 6030 or 6040 certified	For example: Yes -	?? – Medical Gas Technician
Fire Alarm Systems performed in- house or contracted	NFPA 72 Code knowledge NFPA 72-2010 10.4.3	NICET certification	For example: Yes -	?? – Fire Alarm Technician
Fire Door Inspector performed in- house or contracted	NFPA 80 2010 5.2.3.1	No formal certification but knowledge of code and fire door operating requirements LSCS would need to be shown some type of document showing the person doing the work has been trained and maintains that competency.	For example: Yes	?? – Fire Door Inspector
Boilers / High- pressure vessels	Locality driven	Not required by all municipalities ask if local ordinance requires, if so, ask for certification documentation	For example: N/A	
Fire / Smoke dampers performed in- house or contracted	Locality driven	Not required by all municipalities ask if local ordinance requires, if so, ask for certification documentation	For example: N/A	
EVS	Hazardous Waste Handling	DOT Training		

## Interpretive Guidance on NFPA 25 TIA 11-5

Another change to be aware of relates to NFPA TIA 11-5. This publication covers inspection, testing and maintenance (ITM) of water-based fire protection systems. Prior to the Tentative Interim Amendment (TIA) this publication provided maintenance requirements that subjected staff to risk of electrical shock. The TIA provided additional instructions such that certain testing should only be undertaken if certain conditions exist.

3. Revise the Electrical System section of Table 8.1.2 and add a note to the end of the Table to read as follows:

**Table 8.1.2 Alternative Fire Pump Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance Procedures**

Complete as Applicable	Visual Inspection	Check	Change	Clean	Test	Frequency
...						
<b>Electrical System</b>						
...						
Tighten electrical connections as necessary		X				Annually
Lubricate mechanical moving parts (excluding starters and relays)		X				Annually
Calibrate pressure switch settings*		X				Annually
Grease motor bearings			X			Annually
<del>Voltmeter and ammeter for accuracy (5%)</del>		<del>X</del>				<del>Annually</del>
Any corrosion on printed circuit boards (PCBs)*	X					Annually
Any cracked cable/wire insulation <sup>2</sup>	X					Annually
Any leaks in plumbing parts*	X					Annually
Any signs of water on electrical parts*	X					Annually
...						

\*Required only where the conduct of such work can be completed without the opening of an energized electric motor-driven fire pump controller.

This TIA directly modifies the verbiage of the 2011 edition of NFPA 25 and falls under the hierarchy of referenced documents for NFPA 101-2012.