



Policy



Subject: Pyrotechnician Re-Certification training hours and sources

Date: March 8, 2012 **Revised:**

Background: The Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (VSFPC) contains the regulations for the design, setup and conduct of firework displays in the Commonwealth, either aerial, close proximity, indoors or out-of-doors. The VSFPC also contains the requirement that anyone who designs, sets up or conducts a fireworks display is to be appropriately certified as a “Pyrotechnician” by the State Fire Marshal’s Office (SFMO) as a “Pyrotechnician – Aerial” or “Pyrotechnician - Proximate”.

Policy: All Pyrotechnician certifications expire three (3) years after the date of issuance. Certifications may be renewed when the applicant provides proof of having obtained or accumulated not less than 12 hours of continued training or education in the subject areas of explosives storage, the design, setup or conduct of a fireworks display. The continued training or education must be obtained or accumulated during the three years immediately prior to the certificate’s published expiration date.

In addition, using a form supplied by the SFMO a criminal history records check for compliance with § 27-97.2 of the Code of Virginia must be successfully completed again by the candidate for re-certification.

Prior to the initial effective date of this policy, and with the input of firework industry representatives (*the industry*) on the subject of re-certification hours and in particular, acceptable types and sources of training hours, the industry has effectively stated that *this is something the industry can and should take care of itself*.

Definitions:

Acceptable types of training means any subject related to fireworks which can include, but is not limited to: (1) the temporary or permanent storage of explosives, (2) magazine housekeeping, (3) new products, (4) display design, (5) transportation, (6) safety, (7) packing and unpacking explosives, (8) storage practices, (9) magazine construction, (10) placarding, (11) handling misfires, (12) setups, (13) changes in regulations, laws or standards, etc. This can include any information that may be new to the individual(s) or is repetitive.

The viewing of videos in and of itself is not acceptable training unless it is incorporated into a formal course of instruction wherein an instructor is available to accurately respond to questions raised from the viewing of videos and correct any outdated information that may be contained in the video.

Acceptable sources of training means from any in-state or out-of-state individual, company, vendor, association or entity that provides or delivers a course of instruction, training or educational session, in a formal or informal setting. This may include, but is not limited to: (1) trade associations; (2) vendors of retail or wholesale priced fireworks; (3) any state or local government sponsored, sanctioned or hosted training; (4) a company’s designated Safety Director who’s major aspect of employment is ensuring company employees receive all governmental designated or required training, and the related record keeping of such training; etc., and proven with documentation of attendance, subject and hours, the records of which are retained for not less than 3 years. All training records, regardless of source, are subject to audit by the Virginia SFMO.

Documents that effectively say, “*this is what I did for myself*” will be judged as **not acceptable**.

This policy will remain in effect until such time as it is repealed or modified.

(Signed original on file in office of SFM.)

Charles E. Altizer
State Fire Marshal