

NFPA® 1452

Guide for Training Fire
Service Personnel to
Conduct Dwelling
Fire Safety Surveys

2010 Edition



NFPA, 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169-7471
An International Codes and Standards Organization

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Guide for

Training Fire Service Personnel to Conduct Dwelling Fire Safety Surveys

2010 Edition

This edition of NFPA 1452, *Guide for Training Fire Service Personnel to Conduct Dwelling Fire Safety Surveys*, was prepared by the Technical Committee on Fire Service Training. It was issued by the Standards Council on October 27, 2009, with an effective date of December 5, 2009, and supersedes all previous editions.

This edition of NFPA 1452 was approved as an American National Standard on December 5, 2009.

Origin and Development of NFPA 1452

This text was developed by the Committee on Fire Service Training and processed in accordance with NFPA Regulations Governing Committee Projects. This guide was a revision of and replacement for the NFPA booklet entitled *How to Train Fire Fighters to Make Dwelling Inspections*. The 2000 edition of this document was a complete revision of the 1993 edition. It included updated statistics and public safety and educational information that had not been included in prior editions.

The 2005 edition of this document was a complete revision of the 2000 edition. The previous numbering of chapters and paragraphs was changed to reflect requirements of the *Manual of Style for NFPA Technical Committee Documents*.

The 2010 edition brought terminology up to date, revised Chapter 9, Wildland/Urban Interface, and added a new Chapter 10 on All Hazards Education.



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Committee Scope: This Committee shall have primary responsibility for all fire service training techniques, operations, and procedures to develop maximum efficiency and proper utilization of available personnel. Such activities can include training guides for fire prevention, fire suppression, and other missions for which the fire service has responsibility.



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Changes other than editorial are indicated by a vertical rule beside the paragraph, table, or figure in which the change occurred. These rules are included as an aid to the user in identifying changes from the previous edition. Where one or more complete paragraphs have been deleted, the deletion is indicated by a bullet (•) between the paragraphs that remain.

Information on referenced publications can be found in Chapter 2 and Annex B.

Chapter 1 Administration

1.1 Scope. The intent of this document is to provide fire department training officers or other fire service personnel with a guide for the establishment of a community fire safety program for dwellings.

1.1.1 To be effective and to adequately deal with local fire problems, the solution to a particular fire safety problem should be developed locally. This document is intended to be a basic guide to possible elements for inclusion in a locally developed program.

1.1.2 Because the majority of fire deaths occur in residential occupancies, it is essential that fire safety survey programs become an integral part of the total fire safety program in a community. This guide can be applied to both rural and urban communities. Principles contained in this document can be applied to single-family as well as multifamily dwellings, such as apartments, town houses, and condominiums, as local conditions dictate.

1.1.3 This document is not intended to be a training manual or a fire inspection manual, but rather to serve as a guide for establishing a locally prepared dwelling inspection program geared to address the specific problem(s) faced by the local fire service organization. By utilizing fire suppression personnel in this capacity, fire departments can achieve some or all of the following benefits:

- (1) Increased productivity
- (2) Increased community contact
- (3) Familiarization with residential properties

1.1.4 Residents of the community also benefit from a survey program by becoming aware of the following issues:

- (1) Fire safety in the home
- (2) Protective measures to improve the quality of life
- (3) Public safety and awareness

1.1.5 Specific sections of this guide can be included or eliminated as local conditions dictate.

1.2 Purpose. The purpose of this guide is to assist fire department personnel in designing and implementing a dwelling fire safety survey effort as part of a communitywide fire education program to reduce the burden of fire incidents, injuries and deaths, and property losses on the jurisdiction served.

1.2.1* Fire incidence and losses continue to challenge all communities in the United States. Fire is a leading cause of injuries and deaths in the home, and residential fires account for approximately 80 percent of all fire incidents and deaths each year.

1.2.2 The local fire department is responsible for the protection of life and property from fire and related threats. A major part of that responsibility is public fire safety education. Educating citizens about fire safety will shift some degree of fire prevention responsibility to each person in the community, thus making fire department personnel more effective in delivering a full range of fire protection services. Basic information for the public should include emergency behaviors in case of fire, the use of smoke alarms, carbon monoxide (CO) detectors, residential sprinklers, and a fire escape plan. An effective home survey program is a primary method of fire prevention, with proven success in reducing loss of life, injury, and property damage from fire.

1.2.3 In addition to reducing loss of life and property damage, an effective dwelling fire safety program will generate the following opportunities, which benefit the department and the entire community:

- (1) Publicizing year-round community programs and activities (Citizens who support the fire department believe they are getting more for their money in terms of a comprehensive fire service organization.)
- (2) Meeting residents of the community on a one-to-one basis and distributing various fire prevention literature, telephone stickers, and other fire safety information
- (3) Answering specific fire protection or fire safety inquiries
- (4) Allowing fire fighters to become better acquainted with street names and layouts, hydrant and water supply locations, community development, and home construction, as well as pre-fire planning
- (5) Noting the items in (4) and other useful information for discussion during training sessions
- (6) Using fire apparatus regularly, thereby improving driver proficiency
- (7) Increasing the productivity of fire fighters, specifically in fire service-related duties
- (8) Assisting the professional development of fire fighters engaged in the program's activities
- (9) Allowing the fire service to become acquainted with construction types, interior designs, avenues of fire spread, and locations of various concealed spaces (For example, the entrance to attics and crawl spaces can be determined prior to an emergency.)

1.2.4 As worthwhile as the fringe benefits of 1.2.3 are, the most important responsibility is making good fire surveys in order to reduce fire hazards and fires and to provide effective public fire prevention education throughout the community.

Chapter 2 Referenced Publications

2.1 General. The documents or portions thereof listed in this chapter are referenced within this guide and should be considered part of the recommendations of this document.

2.2 NFPA Publications. National Fire Protection Association, 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169-7471.

NFPA 10, *Standard for Portable Fire Extinguishers*, 2010 edition.
 NFPA 70®, *National Electrical Code*®, 2008 edition.
 NFPA 72®, *National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code*, 2010 edition.
 NFPA 211, *Standard for Chimneys, Fireplaces, Vents, and Solid Fuel-Burning Appliances*, 2010 edition.

NFPA 720, *Standard for the Installation of Carbon Monoxide (CO) Detection and Warning Equipment*, 2009 edition.

NFPA 1144, *Standard for Reducing Structure Ignition Hazards from Wildland Fire*, 2008 edition.

2.3 Other Publications.

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition, Merriam-Webster, Inc., Springfield, MA, 2003.

2.4 References for Extracts in Advisory Sections.

NFPA 72®, *National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code*, 2010 edition.
 NFPA 720, *Standard for the Installation of Carbon Monoxide (CO) Detection and Warning Equipment*, 2009 edition.

NFPA 1144, *Standard for Reducing Structure Ignition Hazards from Wildland Fire*, 2008 edition.

NFPA 5000®, *Building Construction and Safety Code*®, 2009 edition.

Chapter 3 Definitions

3.1 General. The definitions contained in this chapter apply to the terms used in this guide. Where terms are not defined in this chapter or within another chapter, they should be defined using their ordinarily accepted meanings within the context in which they are used. *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th edition, is the source for the ordinarily accepted meaning.

3.2 NFPA Official Definitions.

3.2.1* Approved. Acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction.

3.2.2* Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). An organization, office, or individual responsible for enforcing the requirements of a code or standard, or for approving equipment, materials, an installation, or a procedure.

3.2.3 Guide. A document that is advisory or informative in nature and that contains only nonmandatory provisions. A guide may contain mandatory statements such as when a guide can be used, but the document as a whole is not suitable for adoption into law.

3.2.4 Should. Indicates a recommendation or that which is advised but not required.

3.3 General Definitions.

3.3.1 Carbon Monoxide Detector. A device connected to an alarm control unit having a sensor that responds to carbon monoxide. [720, 2009]

3.3.2 Dwelling Unit. One or more rooms arranged for complete, independent housekeeping purposes, with space for eating, living, and sleeping; facilities for cooking; and provisions for sanitation. [5000, 2009]

3.3.3 Smoke Alarm. A single or multiple station alarm responsive to smoke. [72, 2010]

3.3.4* Structure Ignition Zone. The area around a specific structure and associated accessory structures, including all vegetation that contains potential ignition sources and fuels that can affect ignition potential during an intense wildland fire. [1144, 2008]

3.3.5 Wildland Fire. An unplanned and uncontrolled fire spreading through vegetative fuels, at times involving structures. [1144, 2008]

3.3.6* Wildland/Urban Interface. The presence of structures in locations in which the AHJ determines that topographical features, vegetation fuel types, local weather conditions, and prevailing winds result in the potential for ignition of the structures within the area from flames and firebrands of a wildland fire. [1144, 2008]

Chapter 4 Program Benefits

4.1 Material Distribution. Fire safety surveys of dwellings provide the fire department with one of the best means of delivering public fire prevention education through direct contact with residents of the community. Maximum effectiveness can be accomplished through the distribution of fire prevention literature directed at the local fire problem. Fire fighters can explain specific items in the literature and answer any questions that homeowners might have on specific fire department campaigns. Many fire departments find it advantageous to print special cards, certificates, or door stickers to compliment homeowners when their dwellings are found to be in a good, fire-safe condition.

4.2 Support of Other Programs. Personal visits by fire fighters to dwellings for fire safety surveys generally improve the fire department's public image in the community. The program enables fire fighters to distribute information on the use and placement of smoke alarms and carbon monoxide (CO) detectors, the benefits of the installation of residential sprinklers, home fire escape planning, safety hints for babysitters, and a variety of other safety-related subjects. Fire fighters can supplement the fire survey by giving homeowners telephone stickers or cards showing the emergency telephone numbers and procedures for sending a fire alarm. Additionally, the survey program can identify the increasing numbers of unregulated day-care and adult care centers in residential occupancies.

4.3 Continuing Dwelling Survey Programs. In the planning stages of a dwelling fire safety survey program, the fire chief and fire officers should look beyond the immediate short-term benefits, anticipating its extension and continuation as a permanent program. Although the initial dwelling fire safety survey can be a resounding success, the fire department should continue to analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the program and its continued ability to address the current local fire problem. The fire department should realize that planning, implementation, and evaluation processes should be a continuous cycle that reacts to the varying needs of the community. The experiences of fire departments that have initiated successful dwelling fire safety survey programs have led them to retain these activities year after year. The success of these programs has, in some communities, resulted in a drastic reduction in life and property loss from fire.