



Office of the State Fire Marshal

OSFM Announces New Tier 2 Training to Become a Qualified Public School Inspector

In accordance with state statute and Illinois administrative code, local inspectors are authorized to conduct annual fire safety inspections in Illinois public school buildings as long as they have taken the OSFM public school inspection class and have minimum inspection-related certifications from OSFM, NFPA, or ICC. These inspectors are classified as Tier 1 public school inspectors.

The OSFM is introducing a new Tier 2 public school inspection training program that utilizes additional online training and a shadowing process in place of minimum inspection-related certifications. The new program will permit local fire service to become qualified public school inspectors as long as they are assigned as a fire inspector or a fire officer on their fire department or fire protection district. The minimum inspection-related certifications for Tier 1 are not required. Tier 2 candidates will take “blended” learning program that combines online learning, face to face training, and shadowing a Tier 1 qualified public school inspector. It is estimated that the amount of classroom/online training will be 2-3 days. Shadowing requires, at minimum, the inspection of a high school and a grade school and possibly more schools until the Tier 1 inspector is satisfied that the Tier 2 Qualified Fire Official candidate has demonstrated proficiency. Tier 2 inspectors will have a higher level of monitoring by the OSFM.

The goal of the public school inspection program is to develop a mutually beneficial relationship between the local fire service and their public schools. The public school inspection program has become a collaboration between ISBE and the Illinois fire service that creates opportunities for constructive and cooperative efforts towards ensuring school safety. From the fire service perspective, the inspections educate the school staff about the code requirements in schools, as well as allowing pre-planning for emergency responses. School staff provide insight from their unique perspective working with school age children and their familiarity with the building.

By developing this Tier 2 qualification program, more fire departments that do not have the required Tier 1 certifications will be able to inspect their local public schools.

To find more information on becoming a Tier 1 or Tier 2 public school inspector go to:
<http://www.sfm.illinois.gov/Fire-Service/Public-School-Inspection-Program> or
SFM.Techservices@illinois.gov.