

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY FIRE STANDARDS COUNCIL



FIRE INVESTIGATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Fire Standards Council
5700 E. Tudor Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99507
(907)269-5052

www.alaskafiretraining.com

State of Alaska
Fire Investigator Certification Program

Background

In cooperation with the Alaska Association of Fire and Arson Investigators, the Training and Education Bureau (TEB) developed a Level I and Level II Fire Investigator certification program. This program is based on the 1998 edition of NFPA Standard 1033.

Certification Program

The Fire Investigator certification program includes two levels.

Technician – Level I
Certified Fire Investigator – Level II

Technician - Level I is designed for those individuals who may be required to perform basic fire cause and determination investigations either as a part of their normal job duties, or as an additional task assignment. This level includes each of the elements of NFPA Standard 1033, 3-2.1 to 3.2.6, and some of the elements of 3-3, 3-4, 3-5, 3-6 and 3-7. The program also requires completion of 3.1-1, which is the Hazardous Materials Awareness requirement.

Certified Fire Investigator - Level II is designed for those individuals who wish to progress beyond the basic cause and origin investigation. These individuals are generally assigned the fire investigation responsibilities of their organization. This level includes NFPA Standard 1033, 3-2.7 through 3.7.5. Applicants for this certification must be certified at the Fire Investigator I level for a minimum of six (6) months.

Conversion Program

The conversion period is closed for this certification program.

Basic Requirements for Fire Investigator Certification

Technician – Level I

1. Applicant must be at least 18 years of age (NFPA 1033, 1-3.1).
2. Applicant must be currently certified as Hazardous Material Awareness Level.
3. Applicant must complete a TEB approved training program for Level I that will satisfy the requirements of NFPA 1033, Standards 3-1.1, 3-2.1 through 3-2.6 (1998 edition).
4. Applicant must complete the TEB written exam with a score of 70% or more and practical exams for Fire Investigator I.

Certified Fire Investigator – Level II

1. Applicant must be a certified Level I Fire Investigator for at least 6 month.
2. Applicant must complete a TEB approved training program for Level I that will satisfy the requirements of NFPA 1033, Standards 3-1.1, 3-2.7 through 3-7.4 (Level II) (1998 edition).
3. Applicant must complete the TEB written exam with a score of 70% or more and practical exams for Fire Investigator II.
4. Applicant must submit a current Criminal History Background check to FSC with their application for certification.

Approved Investigator Training Courses

To gain certification as a Fire Investigator, applicants must have completed a TEB approved training course for either Level I or Level II. These training courses may be offered either through an accredited training program with an approved curriculum; or through other “stand alone” courses that have been approved by TEB. If a particular entity is interested in conducting a TEB approved investigator course they should contact the Training and Education Bureau at least 6 months before conducting the course. Applicants may not use courses for certification if they have not received prior approval from the Training and Education Bureau.

The Training and Education Bureau has approved the following courses for Investigator Certification:

Technician (Level I) –

1. National Fire Academy’s “Initial Fire Investigation”
2. National Fire Academy’s “Fire Cause Determination for Company Officers”

Technician (Level II) –

1. National Fire Academy’s “Fire & Arson Investigation”
2. Public Agency Training Council’s “Fire/Arson Investigator Academy” (5 day program)

All of these courses meet the training and practical exam requirements for each of the specified levels. Applicants must also complete the written examination to receive certification. The written exam must be completed within 3 years to complete the course.

Testing Elements for Certification

Except as identified above (NFA courses), all applicants for certification must complete both a written and practical examination after completing the approved training course. The written exam for each level is 100 multiple choice questions based on NFPA 1033 (1998 edition), NFPA 921 (2001 edition) and Kirk’s Fire Investigation, 4th edition. The practical exam for each level follows the TEB approved skill sheets for Fire Investigator. Each written exam also includes Hazardous Materials Awareness questions.

Personal Background Checks

Applicants for certification at Level II must attach documentation of a complete criminal history background check. The Supervisor of the Training and Education Bureau will review the criminal history background check. The Supervisor will follow the criminal history background check requirements established by the Alaska Fire Standards Council.

Re-certification

Certification as a Fire Investigator is valid for three calendar years. The recertification requirements for each level are:

Technician – Level I

1. Applicant must complete the FSC application: and
2. Applicant must have documentation of 36 hours of continuing education credits in the area of fire and arson investigation within the three (3) year certification period.

Certified Fire Investigator – Level II

1. Applicant must complete the FSC application: and
2. Applicant must have documented 36 hours of continuing education credits in the area of fire and arson investigation within the three (3) year certification period.

If an individual upgrades from Level I to Level II, the certification date is that of the highest level. Certified Fire Investigators are responsible for tracking their own recertification date. Individuals are given a one year grace period after expiration to complete the recertification requirements. If recertification is not completed within that one year grace period, the individual must complete all practical and written testing elements again, beginning at the Technician level.

Reciprocity/Challenge

Reciprocity will only be issued for Level II Fire Investigators. FSC will give direct reciprocity to an individual who has received Fire Investigator certification through an International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) or Professional Qualifications Board (ProBoard) accredited entity. Applicants for reciprocity must furnish the required background information. Presently FSC does not have a challenge process for Fire Investigators.