
What are the additional duties of a hot work fire watch? The fire watch must review and ensure the internal hot work permit is completed and posted. The fire watch must also remain on site for at least 1 hour after the completion of all hot work.

Is an AHJ permit always required? No. There are few exceptions where an AHJ permit is not required.

Homeowners and hobbyists conducting hot work are exempt from both training and permit requirements.

Individuals who conduct hot work operations on their premise or equipment shall be permitted to carry-out hot work, after consultation with the AHJ before hot work operations can be conducted.

When the hot work activity is performed by a person, or under the direct supervision of a person, licensed and permitted pursuant to a specialized code as defined in M.G.L. c. 143, §96 (ex. licensed plumbers, electricians, sheet metal workers, etc).

When the local fire and building officials have already pre-approved the location as a designated area.

What is the difference between permitted and designated area? A designated area does not require either an AHJ or hot work permit, although these areas are still pre-approved by the building and fire official and must be reviewed annually by the PAI. The AHJ may require an annual permit issued for the designated area.

A permitted area must have a permit from the AHJ and a daily hot work permit issued from the PAI, unless exempt.

Contact Information

For information about the state fire code and fire safety, contact the DFS Code Compliance and Enforcement Unit at:

- Stow Headquarters (Eastern MA)
978-567-3375
- Springfield Office (Western MA)
413-214-6200

Welding, Cutting, and Other Hot Work



Fire Safety Requirements in Massachusetts



The Department of Fire Services (DFS) is pleased to provide this list of frequently asked questions (FAQ's) regarding hot works in Massachusetts. The brochure covers the most common questions concerning hot works safety in the state.

The DFS Code Compliance & Enforcement Unit works in conjunction with local communities to ensure that hot work is conducted safely and in accordance with the state fire code. We have listed the most important terms that you will need to understand.

Definitions

Hot Work - Work involving, burning, welding, or a similar operation that is capable of initiating fires or explosions. Examples include, but are not limited to: welding, cutting, grinding, soldering, heat treating, hot riveting, torch-applied roofing, abrasive blasting, and powder-driven fasteners.

Qualified Person – A qualified person is a person who has successfully completed training approved by the State Fire Marshal.

Permit Authorizing Individual (PAI) –An individual designated by management to authorize hot work.

Permissible Area – There are two types of permissible areas, designated area and permitted area.

Designated Area - A specific location designed and approved for hot work operations that is maintained fire-safe, such as a maintenance shop or a detached outside location, that is of noncombustible or fire-resistant construction, essentially free of combustible and flammable contents, and suitably segregated from adjacent areas.

Permitted Area - Any location, other than a designated area which is approved for hot work and is made fire-safe by removing or protecting combustibles from ignition sources.

Hot Work Permit – A permit issued by the PAI, which shall not be valid for more than 24 hours. Information on the permit should include work location, type of hot work, the work to be done, the operator, duration, equipment, and controls to ensure safety.

Fire Department (AHJ) Permit - A document issued by the AHJ to a qualified person for the purpose of authorizing that individual to carry out the activity of hot work.

Fire Watch - The assignment of a person or persons to an area for the express purpose of notifying the fire department, the building occupants, or both of an emergency; preventing a fire from occurring; extinguishing small fires; or protecting the public from fire or life safety dangers.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the state fire code in Massachusetts? The state fire code is known as the Massachusetts Comprehensive Fire Safety Code, 527 CMR 1.00. Visit www.mass.gov/dfs and search for 527 CMR 1. The state fire code adopts NFPA 1 (2021 Edition), and includes Massachusetts amendments. Within the code are the appropriate editions of NFPA standards that must be met.

Where can the requirements for hot works be found within the state fire code? These requirements are found in Chapter 41. This section adopts NFPA 51B – Standard for Fire Prevention During Welding, Cutting, and Other Hot Work (2019 Edition), which also includes Massachusetts amendments.

Do the personnel involved in hot work need to be trained? For an individual to be qualified to be a PAI, perform fire watches, perform, supervise or delegate any activities of hot work they shall have documentation that he or she has successfully completed training approved by the State Fire Marshal.

What are the Permit Authorizing Individual's (PAI) primary responsibilities? The PAI issues the hot work permit and is charged with ensuring the health and safety within the permissible area.