



Massachusetts HOT WORK Requirements



From the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services

The Department of Fire Services provides this flyer to support hot work safety awareness. It covers the most important terms and most common questions concerning hot work in Massachusetts.

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, and abrasive blasting.

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

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

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 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.

Permissible Area: There are two types of permissible areas: designated areas and permitted 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.

Permit Authorizing Individual (PAI): Someone designated by management to authorize hot work at the job site.

Qualified Person: A person who has successfully completed training approved by the State Fire Marshal's office.



Massachusetts Hot Work Requirements Frequently Asked Questions



Where can I find hot work requirements in the Massachusetts State Fire Code? These requirements are found in Chapter 41. This chapter adopts NFPA 51B, *Standard for Fire Prevention During Welding, Cutting, and Other Hot Work* (2019 Edition), and includes Massachusetts amendments.

Do all personnel involved in hot work need to be trained? Yes. Anyone who serves as a permit authorizing individual, performs fire watches, or performs, supervises, or delegates any hot work operations must have documentation that he or she has successfully completed training approved by the State Fire Marshal's office.

What are the Permit Authorizing Individual's (PAI) primary responsibilities? The PAI authorizes hot work at the job site in conjunction with management. He or she is charged with ensuring the health and safety of people within the permissible area, including fire protection and extinguishing equipment.

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 one hour after the completion of all hot work.

Where do I obtain a hot work permit? Hot work permits are issued by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ), usually the head of the local fire department.

What is the difference between a permitted and a 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.

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 are permitted to carry out hot work *after consultation with the AHJ* before hot work operations can be conducted.
- A permit is not required 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 (such as licensed plumbers, electricians, sheet metal workers, etc).
- A permit is not required when the local fire and building officials have already pre-approved the location as a designated area.

Who can I contact with additional questions? The DFS website has more information at www.mass.gov/dfs. The DFS Code Compliance & Enforcement Unit assists the fire service, regulated industries, and the public in matters related to the State Fire Code. Call **978-567-3375** Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. Fire personnel can request a call-back 24 hours a day by contacting the MEMA dispatch line.