

ATCO Gas and Pipelines Ltd.

Portable Fire Extinguishers at Unstaffed Remote Facilities

PURPOSE

To provide, through the issuance of a province wide variance, an equivalent means to ensure availability of portable fire extinguishers at remote unstaffed energy transmission facilities, for use by the employees of, and/or contractors for, ATCO Gas and Pipelines Ltd. in the event of a fire.

ISSUE

ATCO Gas and Pipelines Ltd. operates remote unstaffed facilities in Alberta as part of their energy transmission system. The National Building Code – 2019 Alberta Edition (NBC(AE)) and the National Fire Code – 2019 Alberta Edition (NFC(AE)) require the installation and maintenance of portable fire extinguishers in these facilities for use during a fire event. Employees and contractors periodically travel to these normally unoccupied buildings to conduct operational checks and maintenance procedures. Municipal Affairs is aware of situations where the required portable fire extinguishers have been tampered with or removed, leaving no operable extinguisher available for use during a fire event. This situation may jeopardize the safety of the occupants and risk of damage to the property in the event of a fire.

AUTHORITY

The Safety Codes Act and the NFC(AE) provide the authority for the Provincial Fire Administrator to issue a written variance (also known as an alternative solution) applicable throughout the province, which provides an approximately equivalent or greater safety performance with respect to persons and property. The Provincial Fire Administrator may include terms and conditions in the variance.

APPLICATION

Compliance with this variance requires that ATCO Gas and Pipelines Ltd. will be required to adopt the following conditions in their procedures where portable fire extinguishers are not provided in each unstaffed remote facility:

- All staff and contractors attending designated unstaffed remote facilities to only do so in a vehicle provided with at least one 80-B:C rated (minimum) portable fire extinguisher; and,
- ATCO Gas and Pipelines Ltd. will ensure that employees and contractors are trained in the use of the 80-B:C rated portable fire extinguisher as a minimum requirement.

Unless stated otherwise, all Code references in this STANDATA are to Division B of the NFC(AE) -2019.

Issue of this STANDATA is authorized by the
Provincial Fire Administrator

[original signed]
Tina Parker

The logo for the province of Alberta, featuring the word "Alberta" in a stylized, cursive script font, followed by a small blue square.

This variance will allow that in the event of a fire all persons attending the facility will have immediate access to the vehicle mounted portable fire extinguisher(s). Compliance with this variance also promotes maintaining good operating condition of portable fire extinguishers on these vehicles as per the NFC(AE) and that the extinguishers are easily accessible.

CODE REFERENCES - National Fire Code – 2019 Alberta Edition,

Division B

2.1.5.1. Selection and Installation

1) Portable extinguishers shall be installed in all buildings except dwelling units.

6.2.1.1. Inspection, Testing and Maintenance

1) Portable extinguishers shall be inspected, tested and maintained in conformance with NFPA 10, "Portable Fire Extinguishers."

Division C

2.2.3.2. Fire Extinguishers

1) All agencies servicing, recharging or carrying out the repair and overhaul of fire extinguishing equipment shall have their facilities and equipment certified

- annually by an approved fire testing agency, and
- by Transport Canada or its appointee for high-pressure hydrostatic testing equipment.

2.2.4.2. Portable Fire Extinguishers

1) Only qualified persons shall install, test or perform maintenance on portable extinguishers.
2) Persons are considered qualified in the installation and maintenance of portable fire extinguishers when they have acquired an approved certificate of training from a public post-secondary educational institution, and they own or are employed by an agency that is certified annually by a recognized certification body as being compliant with CAN/ULC-S532, "Regulation of the Servicing of Portable Fire Extinguishers."

VARIANCE

After examining policies and procedures submitted by ATCO Gas and Pipelines Ltd. for its unstaffed facilities, it has been determined that ATCO Gas and Pipelines Ltd. submitted portable fire extinguisher policies and procedures that satisfy the intent of Sentence 2.1.5.1. (1) of the NFC(AE).

This VARIANCE is applicable throughout the province of Alberta for the unstaffed facilities owned and/or operated by ATCO Gas and Pipelines Ltd.

This VARIANCE expires 6 months after the effective date of the edition of the Fire Code which supersedes the National Fire Code – 2019 Alberta Edition.

This VARIANCE replaces VARIANCE # 14-FCV-004 for ATCO Gas and Pipelines Ltd.

NOTE: Any proposed changes to the original standard operating procedures and policies examined and approved by this office are to be submitted for re-examination and approval prior to implementation to ensure they meet the intent of this Variance.