

Alberta Fire Code 2006 – Part 4 Responsibility

Issue:

The Chief Fire Administrator has been made aware that misunderstanding may exist in some municipalities accredited in the Fire Discipline regarding the scope of their accreditation when they choose to opt out of responsibility for the portions of the Alberta Fire Code 2006 (AFC) Division B Part 4 dealing with storage tanks for flammable and combustible liquids.

Background:

A number of municipalities have determined that while they wish to be accredited under the Safety Codes Act in the Fire Discipline to conduct investigations of the cause and origin of fires and administer the AFC they do not wish to be responsible for compliance monitoring of “storage tanks for flammable liquids and combustible liquids” under Part 4. When a municipality chooses to do this and properly notifies the Safety Codes Council of this the responsibility for the compliance monitoring of these storage tanks rests with Alberta Municipal Affairs who, through a written service agreement, delegates this responsibility to the Petroleum Tank Management Association of Alberta (PTMAA).

Because this process of “opting out” has been often referred to as “Excluding Part 4” or “Opting out of Part 4” in conversations and some documents there are many municipalities and safety codes officers who believe that all of “Part 4 – Flammable and Combustible Liquids” of the AFC is not their responsibility or within their scope to provide advice or inspect for compliance.

The scope of the PTMAA-AMA agreement deals only with the installation and operations of tanks and their associated piping. In those potential instances where there is belief that the accredited municipality does not have any responsibilities under Part 4 of the AFC, there exists a possibility and likelihood that no compliance monitoring, inspection or advice is taking place in places where flammable and combustible liquids are stored, sold and used. This may include service stations, bulk plants, cardlocks, industrial plants, laboratories and construction sites.

Intent:

As Division B Part 4 of the Alberta Fire Code 2006 covers a variety of occupancies and activities, many of which have the potential to create an increased hazard and risk when the requirements of the Alberta Fire Code 2006 are not met, it is the intent of the Chief Fire Administrator to ensure that all accredited municipalities and their safety codes officers are aware of what they have “opted out” from and what jurisdiction and scope they retain as part of their accreditation.

This also reinforces the focus of Alberta Municipal Affairs’ agreement with the Petroleum Tank Management Association of Alberta to manage the compliance of permitting, installation and operations of flammable and combustible liquids storage tanks.