City of Bellingham
Classification Specification - Civil Service or AFSCME

CLASS TITLE	**Fire Inspector**
DEPARTMENT	**Fire**
UNION:	**106**
SG:	**32**
CS:	**Promotional**
FLSA:	**Y**
EE04CODE:	**PR**

NATURE OF WORK:

The Fire Inspector is a uniformed fire department position which performs inspections on buildings, structures, some outdoor facilities and fire protection systems. Ensures compliance with fire codes. Witnesses and approves acceptance and certification tests on fire protection systems. Reviews hazardous materials handling, storage, use and installations. Occasionally reviews construction and fire protection equipment plans. Conducts fire and arson investigations. Employees in the Inspection Division are scheduled for a 40-hour work week.

Life Safety Division staff work under the guidelines and regulations of the International Fire Code, the International Building Code, the National Fire Protection Association Standards, City and departmental policies and procedures, and nationally recognized standards of life safety and fire protection.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

Positions in the Fire Inspector classification are distinguished from entry level Firefighter/Paramedic positions by their responsibility for the inspection of buildings and investigations of fires to determine cause. An extensive knowledge of fire codes and investigation procedures is required to perform the duties of this position.

SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS:

The Fire Inspector report to the Fire Marshal.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

1. Inspects buildings, structures and some outdoor facilities to confirm compliance with fire code requirements. Witnesses tests of new and existing life safety and fire protection equipment and systems to assure reliability.

2. Investigates, inspects and recommends approval of permits as required for specific existing occupancies.

3. Responds to and investigates fires, explosions, complaints and other incidents to determine origin, cause and circumstances. Prepares written reports of facts and findings.

4. Delivers public fire safety education programs to a variety of groups and assists groups or businesses in the development of emergency and evacuation plans.

5. Occasionally will review and evaluate construction plans for new and remodeled multi-family, institutional, commercial, educational, industrial and other development for compliance with applicable fire protection standards, fire safety and building codes, regulations and ordinances.
6. Occasionally will review and evaluate plans and specifications of fire suppression, fire detection, fire alarm, smoke control, standpipe and other fire protection systems for compliance with applicable engineering and building codes and standards.

7. Works with Operations Division personnel on inspections, particularly those that are referred to the Life Safety Division for review or legal action.

8. Maintains written records, reports and correspondence of all inspections and fire investigation activities.

9. Maintains the ability and occasionally will be required to perform the duties of Firefighter when assigned in major emergency incidents.

10. May act as Fire Marshal.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

- A working knowledge of the field of fire protection principles and practices, as well as knowledge of fire protection design, equipment and installation practices.
- Strong oral and written communication skills for working with a diversity of departmental and City personnel, citizens and other public agency officials.
- Strong problem analysis and decision-making, interpersonal sensitivity, adaptability/flexibility, stress tolerance and time management skills.
- Ability to read and interpret construction and fire protection system plans and specifications.
- Ability to read and interpret codes, standards and ordinances, and apply the same to plan review in a manner consistent with Department policies and procedures.
- Willingness and ability to respond after normal working hours to investigate fires, explosions, complaints and other incidents.
- Must be willing and able to work flexible hours and be available for call-outs.
- Ability to maintain consistent and punctual attendance.
- Physical ability to perform all of the duties of Firefighter including the ability to inspect confined spaces.
- Experience working with personal computers including word processing, spreadsheet and data management programs desired.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

- The position consists of office, public building and emergency scene environments.
- It may involve day or night work times for investigations.
- Will frequently involve other agencies.

- May involve work without direct supervision.
- May require court testimony.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- Two years of experience as a Firefighter with the Bellingham Fire Department. Five years of experience as a Firefighter with the Department preferred.
- A minimum of thirty (30) documented hours of training or education in fire investigation, and sixty (60) documented hours of training or education in fire protection systems and equipment must be completed within one year of hire.
- International Fire Code certification is required within two (2) years of hire.
- An Associate's degree in fire protection, fire technology, fire command and administration or a related field preferred.

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