

RCA INDUSTRY FUND

BULLETIN #03-2005

Philadelphia Fire Code/Hot Work Permits

In adopting the new International Building Code, the City of Philadelphia and other municipalities, also adopted uniform International Codes for Electrical, Mechanical, Fire and Existing Buildings. In many cases code officials found it necessary to enact amendments to the International Codes in order to address any number of local and state safety issues.

In amending the International Fire Code, Philadelphia officials took the opportunity to expand the Philadelphia Fire Code in several areas that directly affect roofing contractors. In particular the City added new permit and notification requirements for contractors using roof torches and L.P. gas cylinders. Attached to this Bulletin is a reprint of sections of the Amended Philadelphia Fire Code that you should be aware of. Please see that those persons within your company who need to be aware of these code requirements receive a copy of this information.

Specifically, the Amended Code, at F-105.6.24, now includes **the application of roof coverings with the use of an open flame device** as a **Hot Work Operation** that requires an Operational Permit to be secured by the contractor before any work can be performed. As many contractors who participate in the NRCA/CNA insurance program have experienced first hand, both the insurance and building code industries are committed to eliminating structural and monetary losses associated with torch applied roofing to the fullest extent possible.

All contractors should note that under Section A-904.2 of the Philadelphia Administrative Code, the fee for an Operational Permit is based on the number of operations listed in Section F-105.6 of the Fire Code. The fee for 1 - 3 Operations is \$75. The fee for 4 - 7 Operations is \$150. The significance of this is that in addition to the Hot Work Operation, the amended Fire Code also requires an Operational Permit under **Section F-105.6.28 LP Gas** if a contractor stores and/or uses LP containers of more than 200 lbs. total LP gas capacity on the jobsite. Similarly, at Section F-105.6.32 another operation requiring a permit is found if the contractor intends to use a torch device in a hazardous fire area. While it appears that these three are the operations most likely to affect roofing, it would be wise for all contractors to review all operations in F-105.6.1 through 105.6.47.

While not necessarily a new amendment, contractors should make note of Section F-308.4 which contains the Code requirements for fire extinguishers used with torch roof operations. The Section also contains the requirement for a one hour fire watch after torch devices are used, as well as, referencing National Fire Protection Association Publication #241. Copies of the NFPA Publication are available from this office upon request. Contractors should also note that under the City of Philadelphia's Existing Building Code requirements at Section EB-1301.7 all Hot Work Operations on existing buildings (re-roofing) must comply with the Amended Philadelphia Fire Code.

Finally, under Section F-2601.2.1 the Fire Code requires that permit applicants must file proof of public liability and property damage insurance in such amount as the City's Law Department deems adequate before a permit will be issued. Section F-2601.2.2 requires persons performing any Hot Work Operation to **notify the Commercial and Industrial Fire Inspection Unit** of the Department of L & I at least 48 hours in advance of conducting such operation.

As always, should you have any questions regarding this information please feel free to contact this office at (215)509-7200.