

HAWAII STATE FIRE COUNCIL (SFC)  
ANNUAL REPORT FY 2015-16

The State Fire Council (SFC) is administratively attached to the State of Hawaii (State), Department of Labor and Industrial Relations and comprised of four county Fire Chiefs. Its primary mission is to develop a comprehensive fire service emergency management network for the protection of life, property, and environment throughout the State. The SFC is responsible for adopting a state fire code, applying and administering federal fire-related grants, and administering a Reduced Ignition Propensity Cigarette (RIPC) Program. The SFC may advise and assist county fire departments where appropriate and prescribe standard procedures and forms related to inspections, investigations, and reporting of fires. It also advises the Governor and legislature on issues relating to fire prevention and protection, life safety, and any other function or activity for which the various county fire departments are responsible.

The currently adopted State Fire Code uses the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1 Fire Code, 2012 Edition. The State Fire Code Investigative Committee, which is comprised of one member from each county fire department, met regularly throughout the fiscal year to review and amend the NFPA 1 Fire Code, 2015 Edition. The State Fire Code, in union with the county fire codes, comprehensively addresses minimum requirements for the protection of life and property to mitigate and prevent the disastrous effects of fire, explosion, and hazardous materials incidents.

The SFC has been a voting member of the State Building Code Council (SBCC) since its inception in 2007. Its 11 voluntary members are comprised of county, State, and private stakeholders who coordinate the adoption of a comprehensive set of building codes for the State. The technical work of the SBCC has been completed for several code cycles; however, due to a lack of funding to initiate, facilitate, and complete the Hawaii Administrative Rule making process, the state building codes lag far behind more than 90% of other states. This lack of action will increasingly place future federal disaster relief grants, affordable property insurance rates, and the Hawaii Hurricane Relief Fund at risk.

After the passage of Act 218, 2008 Legislative Session, Hawaii became the 36<sup>th</sup> state, along with the District of Columbia, requiring that only RIPC be sold in the State effective September 30, 2009. The SFC administers the RIPC program. The purpose of this law is to reduce the number of accidental fires involving smoking-related materials and decrease the number of injuries and fatalities. On January 16, 2014, the SFC hired an RIPC program manager. A list of cigarettes that were approved for sale was completed. A total of 748 brand/styles of cigarettes are approved for sale in the State. Retail inspections reveal that closer to 250 of those brand/styles are actually being sold in retail outlets. Work in progress includes administrative rules, enforcement procedures, independent compliance testing, fire investigation statistical analysis, and "roll your own" compliance issues. In 2015, the RIPC program manager began to conduct inspections of wholesale and retail businesses that distribute or sell cigarettes. These inspections were conducted throughout the State. A total of 154 inspections were conducted in 2015 and another 799 were completed in 2016.

Total inspections conducted to date: 953

Travel costs incurred to date: \$ 4,723.54

The RIPC program manager also began to randomly purchase cigarettes that were sent to preapproved facilities to conduct independent RIPC testing. In 2015, 113 brand/styles were purchased and sent for testing. Another 273 brand/styles were purchased and sent for testing in 2016.

Total purchase costs to date, including shipping and handling: \$ 13,657.12

Total testing costs to date: \$138,625.25

Cigarettes sold in in the State must be certified to be “Fire Standard Compliant” or FSC cigarettes. Manufacturers must provide the RIPC office with proper documentation verifying this fact initially for each brand/style they wish to sell and again every three years thereafter. A \$375 fee must also be provided for each brand/style cigarette by the manufacturer.

Total RIPC certification fees collected to date:

\$953,625.00

Approximate current RIPC fund balance:

\$695,698.74

The SFC supported and submitted testimony during the 2016 Legislative Session on bills related to repealing the statute that prohibits counties from requiring residential fire sprinklers in new one- and two-family dwellings; allowing a residential sprinkler tax credit; fireworks housekeeping; increasing display permit fees; and prohibiting the statewide use of consumer fireworks on the three designated holidays. None of the bills passed. The SFC introduced and supported House Concurrent Resolution 32 and Senate Resolution 6, which created a task force to study the issues related to the increased risk of cancer in fire fighters compared to the general population. Both measures passed.

The SFC coordinated statewide fire service training courses in Residential Sprinkler Plan Review, Initial Fire Investigation for the First Responder, Shaping the Future, Wildland Urban Interface, Training Operations in Small Departments, Exercising Leadership Ethically, Who Protects Firefighters from Firefighters, and Preparation for Initial Company Operations. The SFC continues to meet quarterly to fulfill its statutory duties and responsibilities.