

# *Fire Safety Act*

Office of the Fire Commissioner  
Emergency Management BC

UBCM Convention

September 13, 2022



# Outline

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- Modernizing fire safety legislation
- Timeline
- Scope and goals
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- Current work
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# Background

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- The *Fire Safety Act* (FSA) was given Royal Assent in 2016 to modernize fire safety legislation.
- As the FSA was not brought into force, the *Fire Services Act* remains in effect.
- Some local authorities have expressed concern about the implementation delay.
- Before bringing the FSA into force, amendments are needed to reflect the Province's goal of a single standard of fire safety in BC and to ensure successful implementation.

# Modernizing Fire Safety Legislation

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- Key changes between the *Fire Services Act* and the *Fire Safety Act* include:
  - A system of risk-based compliance monitoring
  - Streamlined processes for fire inspection and investigation
  - Improved powers for local authorities to mitigate imminent fire risks rather than refer those concerns to the province
  - Processes for local authorities to evacuate and secure buildings when there is an immediate risk to life and safety
  - Risk-based model for fire code compliance monitoring will help local authorities apply fire prevention and inspection efforts where the need is greatest
  - A manageable and streamlined out-of-court enforcement system with administrative penalties aimed at improving compliance

# Timeline

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- In 2018, the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General first indicated government's intention to implement a single standard of fire safety and directed the Office of the Fire Commissioner to work collaboratively with UBCM to understand and mitigate regional district concerns.
- In 2022, the Single Standard of Fire Safety working group convened with members from UBCM representing regional districts, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, EMBC and OFC.

# Scope and Goals

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- The proposed amendments being considered largely focus on the requirements for risk-based compliance monitoring and fire safety inspections of public buildings in regional districts.
- The proposed amendments are intended to:
  - Increase building-owner compliance with the BC fire code
  - Increase the efficiency of fire services through a risk-based inspection schedule
  - Introduce an administrative monetary penalty system to encourage compliance
  - Increase public safety and the safety of fire fighters
  - Help prevent fire-related injuries and deaths
- These changes work towards achieving a single standard of fire safety in BC.

# Engagement

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- Local authorities:
  - Single Standard of Fire Safety Working Group with representatives from regional districts, UBCM, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, EMBC/OFC
  
- Subject-Matter expertise:
  - Fire Chiefs' Association of BC

## Current Work: Policy and Legislation

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- Policy development for defining inspectable properties
- Policy development for implementation models
- Planning for consultation with Indigenous partners





# Current Work: Operational Expertise

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- Inspections in regional districts
  - Inspectable properties—data assessment and calculations
  - Risk-based compliance monitoring framework
  - Field validation and continuous improvement
- General
  - Standards
  - Training materials and support



# Thank you!

## Questions?

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