



NICET Certification – Transition to Computer Based Testing under way

On Sept. 1, 2010, NICET began their transition to the new *Water-Based Fire Protection (formerly Automatic Sprinkler) Systems Layout*. This new form of testing is computer based and often referred to as *CBT*.

Transition to CBT for *Inspection and Testing of Water-Based Systems* is planned for early 2011.

The new format is a quality improvement that features convenient test scheduling (more times and locations), scores before leaving the testing facility and better security.

Water-Based Systems Layout Certification

September 1, 2010 was the first day of transition for the Water-Based Fire Protection Systems Layout certification. Currently, all applicants will be required to test in the new Standard Model/CBT format, **EXCEPT** for those who:

1. Previously tested one or more Work Element (WEs) in Automatic Sprinkler Systems Layout, or
2. Have an active Automatic Sprinkler Systems Layout application postmarked prior to September 1, 2010.

Automatic Sprinkler Systems Layout WE applications postmarked between September 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011 will be accepted only from individuals who meet the two conditions above. Those individuals may continue to apply for WE exams UNTIL one of the following occurs:

1. The individual submits an application for a Standard Model/CBT exam in the program, or
2. The last day of the transition submittal (June 30, 2011) has passed.

Automatic Sprinkler Systems Layout WE testing will end by September 30, 2011.

As for the testing process, for Sprinklers, the difference is the organization of the material. The new CBT exam is based on NFPA 13, 2007 edition. For most individuals, any information they have already studied will be applicable to the new exam – it is still based on the codes and the 2002 and 2007 versions are not significantly different.

The new CBT exam is much more stringent on what references are allowed into the exam. For the Level I exam, NFPA 13 (2007) is the only allowed reference. The Level



II exam allows: NFPA 13 (2007), NFPA 14 (2007), NFPA 20 (2007), and Automatic Sprinkler Systems for Residential Occupancies Handbook (2007) in the testing facility.

Dave Craynon, President and CEO of Fire Tech Productions, offers this advice to current candidates: “If you started testing in the WE format, sign-up and test as often as possible between now and next September. Stay with the format you know, study and get it done. There are plenty advantages of the work element format, including: crossovers, credit for elements passed, more references allowed and buying time for elements still needed.”

Updates to NICET Policy 20

Previously, Policy 20 stated candidates were only allowed to test three times within a two-year span and would have to participate in NICET-approved training prior to a fourth attempt. NICET elected to revise the policy for two major reasons: 1) NICET's mission is to certify engineering technicians and technologists and 2) the new Standard Model/CBT does not allow only one item to be tested. Therefore, Policy 20 now reads:

Failed tests can only be rescheduled for examination after a period of 4 months has elapsed. Retesting will be limited to four attempts in a two-year span to achieve a passing score.

The modifications to Policy 20 are effective immediately. Anyone still looking for an unlock course can stop, they are no longer applicable.

Lisa Salzman, CIO of Fire Tech Productions notes “We offer online courses on every individual sprinkler element. Each course contains content to study as well as sample test questions. We always encourage our clients to review all material in the online course as well as the appropriate NFPA standards. Being familiar with the standards will be key to passing the exam.”

Fire Tech Productions offers Free Intro to NICET webinars every month. (See www.firetech.com for an existing schedule). The November event was attended by Chip Hollis, NICET Marketing Director. During the webinar, he noted that the upcoming transition of Inspection and Testing of Water-Based Systems will begin early next year. He also stated that due to the fact that the current testing is out dated, the transition cycle for this sub-field will be only 6 months.

The testing fees for the exams have changed as well. Previously, one fee was charged for the test and work experience review. Now there are two different charges. This change allows you to test and if you pass, you can then have your work experience reviewed. On the other hand, you can choose to have your work experience reviewed first to make sure



your number of years of applicable experience are equal to or greater than the level you are testing.

For further information on the NICET transition, see www.nicet.org.

Interested parties can also contact Fire Tech Productions at www.firetech.com, email to info@firetech.com or phone 937-434-FIRE(3473). Fire Tech Productions instructors are NICET certified and have over 70 years combined experience with Fire Protection and NFPA codes.

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