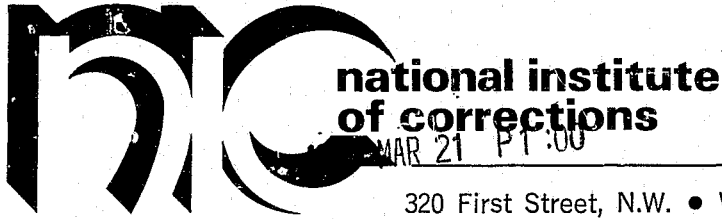


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national institute  
of corrections

MAR 21 11:00  
320 First Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20534 • Phone 202-724-3106

January 9, 1980

Dear Friend:

The attached "Penal Fire Safety Checklist" was developed by the National Fire Protection Association under a National Institute of Corrections' grant to conduct fire safety training programs for correctional workers. The attached materials have been excerpted from the workbook used in the fire safety training.

We hope the material will assist you in making an initial audit of the fire safety levels in your local correctional facilities. For more information, please contact the National Fire Protection Association, 470 Atlantic Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02210.

Sincerely,

ALLEN F. BREED  
Director

## PENAL FIRE SAFETY CHECKLIST

A recent study conducted by the NFPA showed that 85 percent of the fires in penal institutions were incendiary in nature. Most of these fires were started by the use of smoking materials, such as matches, cigarette lighters, cigarettes, etc. Of the fires studied, 73 percent involved the ignition of clothing, mattresses, bed clothes, and padded wall coverings. Most of the prison fires indicated that although correctional officers have acted promptly and with the best intentions, in many cases at great personal risk, often their responses show that they have not been properly trained to respond to a fire. Delayed discovery or lack of automatic extinguishing equipment was shown to be a factor in almost every incident studied.

The following checklist has been developed to assist you, the correctional official, to review the level of life safety in penal facilities. It is not intended to accurately evaluate the level of life safety in a penal institution. Nor is the checklist intended to be used as a design tool. The checklist is intended to present most of the critical elements of life safety from fire that correctional officials should be aware of. Ask yourself each of the following questions and check the appropriate block.

A "YES" answer to the questions indicates that the probability of a disastrous fire occurring is reduced. It does not, however, mean that a fire will not occur. It is important that once an acceptable level of fire safety is achieved, it is maintained at that desired level.

A "NO" or "DON'T KNOW" answer to any of the following questions indicates an area that requires your attention since it points out an area which may affect life safety in your institution.

## REVISED CHECKLIST

### IGNITION CONTROL

YES                  NO                  DON'T KNOW

1. Are special, supervised areas provided for smoking?

2. Is inmate access to smoking materials and matches controlled?

3. Is the use of extension cords prohibited?

4. Is there proper electrical distribution wiring?

### Furnishings and Contents

YES                  NO                  DON'T KNOW

1. Are the furnishings in use noncombustible?

Check, if any of the following are used in your facility.

( ) Furnishings padded with foamed plastics or foamed rubber.

( ) Foamed plastic or foamed rubber padding on walls, ceilings or floor (padded cell).

( ) Mattresses constructed, in whole or in part, of foamed plastics or foamed rubber.

2. If any of the above furnishings are used, do you know the fire performance of the materials?

3. Has any action been taken to alleviate the hazard created by materials which have been shown to have poor fire performance?

### Interior Finish

Check, if any of the following are used as interior finish in your facility.

( ) Plywood

( ) Paneling (wood, plastic, or laminate)

( ) Foamed Plastics

( ) Fiberboard

YES NO DON'T KNOW

1. If any of the above materials are in use, do you know what the fire performance of these materials are? (i.e. flame spread and smoke developed indexes)

2. Has any action been taken to alleviate the hazard created by materials which have been shown to have poor fire performance?

Building Materials

YES NO DON'T KNOW

1. Is the building of noncombustible construction?

OCCUPANT AND PROPERTY PROTECTION

YES NO DON'T KNOW

1. Can occupants either be defended in place from fire or can they be reliably evacuated to a secure area of refuge?

Means of Egress (See NFPA No. 101, Life Safety Code)

YES NO DON'T KNOW

1. Are there two remote paths of exit travel from each cel. block or area?

2. Are reliable means provided to permit the prompt release of inmates from locked areas?

3. Is prompt release of inmates guaranteed by adequate correctional personnel continuously on duty with keys readily available?

4. Is more than one set of keys readily available in case of loss or breakage during a fire emergency?

5. Is travel distance to exits within the limits specified by the Life Safety Code?

### Examples of Maximum Travel Distances

Area	Nonsprinklered	Sprinklered
Cell Block/Dormitory	100 Feet	150 Feet
Work Area	100 Feet	150 Feet
High Hazard Areas	75 Feet	75 Feet
Dining, Recreation Areas	150 Feet	200 Feet
Infirmery-Hospital	100 Feet	150 Feet
Office Areas	200 Feet	300 Feet

YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Are proper exits provided?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Is the capacity of the exits adequate?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Are the exitways continuously illuminated?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9. Is emergency lighting provided?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10. Are the exits and paths to them clearly marked?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	11. Are exits kept clear and maintained in usable condition?

### DETECTION AND SUPPRESSION

YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Are portable fire extinguishers of the proper type and number provided?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Is your facility protected by a complete heat detection or smoke detection system?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Is your facility protected by a complete automatic sprinkler system?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Are detection and/or sprinkler systems tested on a regular basis?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Is the fire detection and/or sprinkler system alarm connected directly to the local fire department?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Are fire hose stations for use by correctional officers provided and readily accessible?

YES      NO      DON'T KNOW

- |                          |                          |                          |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. Have all personnel been trained in the proper use of all fire protection and fire extinguishing equipment?                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. Has the fire brigade (either employees or inmates) been provided with the proper fire fighting equipment and training?                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. Can security be maintained while fire fighting operations are in progress?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. Are there means to stretch fire hoses through double security gates (sallyports) so that the gates can be closed and security maintained? |

#### PLANNING AND TRAINING OPERATIONS

YES      NO      DON'T KNOW

- |                          |                          |                          |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Does each building have a written fire emergency plan detailing staff action during a fire emergency?                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Does each shift practice the fire emergency plan at least quarterly?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. Are new employees briefed on the fire emergency plan?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. After each practiced fire emergency drill, is a critique performed in order to evaluate and up-date the fire emergency plan? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. Does your emergency plan provide for reliable release of inmates to a secure yard or other area in case of fire?             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. Is there a reliable method of notifying correctional officers that a fire emergency is in progress?                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. Have inmates been instructed on emergency procedures in case of fire?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. Have inmates been given fire safety briefings?   |

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

9. Has the local fire department been involved in the formulation of your fire emergency plan?

10. Has the local fire department been briefed on building conditions, contents, and fire fighting facilities within the complex?

11. Have you provided the opportunity for and assisted the local fire department in the prefire planning of the facility?

12. Is the fire department the first to be notified in the event of a fire emergency?



**END**