

AUTOMATIC EXTINGUISHER SYSTEMS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MEETING MINUTES – MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2025, 1:30PM–4:30PM

Hybrid Committee Meeting



Meeting Location:

California Natural Resources Building
Office of the State Fire Marshal
715 P St, Sacramento, CA 95814
2nd Floor, Room 02-301

Zoom Meeting ID: 878 9009 7820

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jason McBroom, Alpine Fire Protection District
Jose Colin, Suisun City Fire Department
Chad Richardson, Los Angeles Fire Department
Randy Roxson, Sprinkler Fitters Association of California
David Karrick, California American Fire Sprinkler Association (CAFSA)
James Feld, University of California, Berkeley (retired)
Edie Wade, Brooks Equipment Company
Allen Quirk, National Association of Fire Equipment Distributors (NAFED)
Peter Hulin, National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA)
Vahe Zohrabian, California Fire Protection Coalition
Matthew McCarrick, California Association of Life Safety & Fire Equipment (CALSAFE)
Shelley Merrell, Integrated Fire & Safety
Richard Eyssallenne, Black Bird Fire Protection
Kyle Howeel, Kimble & Co.
Brian Hutto, Schmidt Fire Protection
Jeff Dixon, Sprinkler Fitters Local 483
Amber Barrios, Associated Compliance & Training

MEMBERS ABSENT

Wayne Weisz, American Fire Sprinkler Association (AFSA)
Ken Kwong, Sacramento City Fire Department
Travis Tyler, California State University
James Knowles, Amerex

OSFM STAFF

Andrew Henning, Assistant Deputy Director, OSFM
Brice Bennett, Committee Chairperson and Division Chief for Engineering and Investigations, OSFM
Jeffery Schwartz, Deputy State Fire Marshal III Supervisor, OSFM
Patricia Rock, Committee Co-Chairperson and AES Program Coordinator, OSFM
Terence Liszewski, FE Program Coordinator, OSFM
Courtney Walker, OSFM

Larry Godbout, OSFM
Taylor Machado, OSFM
Chris Dale, OSFM
Alexander Rapphahn, OSFM
Thoms Setnan, OSFM

PUBLIC GUESTS

David Lewandowski, Jorgensen Company and CalSafe
Alicia Kerrick, Greater Bay Area Chapter AFSA
Shane Clary, Bay Alarm Company
Kim Stocking, Andservice101
Jeffery Van Rhyn, Local 669
Steven Miles, Local 483
Shawn Arballo, Local 709
Angelica Ramirez, AFSA Greater Bay Area Chapter.
Anthony Romero, Bakersfield City Fire Department
Shawn Gray, Lund Pearson McLaughlin Fire Protection Systems
Jon Joseph, Symons Fire

1. CALL TO ORDER

A. Welcome and Logistics Briefing

The meeting was called to order by Chief Brice Bennett at 1:35 PM. Chairperson Bennett reviewed Bagley-Keene requirements for committee members, meeting etiquette, and when the public attendees could make comments.

B. Committee Members Introduction and Roll Call

Roll call was conducted by Alexander Rapphahn, and it was determined that a quorum (17 of 21) of members was present.

C. Introduction of Non-Committee Members.

All non-committee members introduced themselves.

D. Approval of Minutes for July 16th, 2025.

Committee Co-Chairperson Patricia Rock asked for approval for the July 16th, 2025, meeting.

Member Vahe Zohrabian asked that a correction be made on Page 9, second paragraph, change AFJ to AHJ.

Committee Co-Chairperson Rock asked for approval for the July 16th, 2025, meeting with the correction.

It was moved by Member Edie Wade to approve the minutes; motion seconded by Member Allen Quirk. Motion was approved unanimously.

E. Announcements and Division Updates

Chairperson Bennett passed on a message from Chief Berlant, thanking the committee members for their participation and informed the committee that Chief Berlant would not be attending.

Chairperson Bennett informed the committee that he had been selected as the new

chief of Fire Engineering and Investigations and that Larry Godbout had been hired as the a new Staff Services Manager I.

New Committee members Kyle Howell and Brian Hutto introduced themselves.

Committee Co-Chairperson Rock stated that the renewal period for Type A1/A2, Type L, and Fire Pump Test Certifications had ended and late fees were now in effect.

Additionally, when renewing a Type A1 or A2 license, Committee Co-Chairperson Rock asked that employee lists be updated, proof of insurance be uploaded, and add any new additional locations.

2. OLD BUSINESS

A. OI Predict Workgroup

Committee Co-Chairperson Rock stated that the IO Predict workgroup has been renewing current test questions and creating new ones. They will soon begin to examine the questions and identify where they fit into the exam.

B. CEU Workgroup

Committee Co-Chairperson Rock stated that in the last meeting the committee voted to create a CEU workgroup to look at improving CEU security and other ways to improve the CEU process. The CEU workgroup is meeting twice a month and has already started making progress. Member Amber Barrios stated that the group has made a lot of progress in the last two meetings, and they are organizing to present at the next committee meeting.

C. Auto Mist Systems

Committee Co-Chairperson Rock asked if any of the committee members had any experience with the Auto Mist Systems since the last committee meeting, which no members had.

D. NFPA 25 Workgroup Presentation of NFPA 2026 adoption with amendments

Member and Work Group Leader David Karrick stated that the group identified all the amendments in the 2013 edition and compared them to the 2026 edition. The differences were noted and discussed; any recommendations were made on a group consensus, with differing opinions talked through. 27 items were identified to be recommended as amendments to the 2026 edition. Adoption of the national standard with amendments would require amending the current AES inspection forms to meet the new standards. The current recommended amendments are two pages back and front and would be sip-sheeted into the NFPA 25 2026 edition. The group's recommendation is to move forward with the adoption of NFPA 2026 with the recommended amendments. This would allow the AES committee to adopt a standardized and ongoing review process of upcoming draft proposals of NFPA 25. Additionally, it would allow for a much more readily adoptable standard in the state of California and allow the industry to address new technologies and the ITM processes required with them in a much timelier manner.

Committee Co-Chairperson Rock stated that the recommended amendments will be shared with the committee members so they can review them. They will vote on them at the next meeting. Member David Karrick added that the document being shared

with committee members is a draft document, they are looking for feedback at the next meeting, or if possible, before the meeting. This would allow for any clarification or justification to happen outside of the meeting, preventing them from going over every item in the meeting. Chairperson Bennett asked how many items were recommended and if Member David Karrick wanted to share the document. Member and Work Group Leader David Karrick replied that there were 27 items recommended and that they wanted to share the document with committee members only.

Public Guest Shane Clary asked via chat when the amendments would be released to the public for review and comment. Chairperson Bennett replied that it would be during the 45-day public comment period of the regulatory process. Member Jim Feld asked when the committee members would receive the draft document. Chairperson Bennett replied that they would receive it via email before the end of the week. Member Shelley Merrel asked how many forms would need to be changed. Member David Karrick replied that the workgroup decided to wait for directions from the committee before starting to work on the forms, but they acknowledged they would have to alter forms and possibly create new ones. Member Peter Hulin asked what the time frame was. Chairperson Bennett replied that the committee members will be sent the recommendations, and they will vote on them at the next meeting. After that, the staff will have to formulate a rulemaking package to adopt NFPA 25 2026 with amendments. Each amendment will need to have a purpose, a problem, and a rationale. The process will be quicker than going through the whole document, but they do not have a time frame for the OAL ruling-making process.

Member David Karrick stated that the document being provided to the committee members does not include the amendments to the AES forms. They are not looking at going away from the AES, only alter them to accommodate the current amendments. Chairperson Bennett stated that this would not affect the licensing in Title 19, only the forms, and there is also a form standardization process happening in the department. Member David Karrick added that frequency would be the primary change to the forms, but they would also address things not currently on the forms, like weekly or monthly items. This could require a new form. Member Peter Hulin asked if qualifications were addressed in the recommended amendments. Member David Karrick replied that the 27 recommended amendments do not have to do with circumventing the committee's qualification process. The recommended amendments do not address the qualifications of the individual only the work that can be done. Committee Co-Chairperson Rock stated that the amendment pertaining to the type of license required will be carried over as it is written now. Member Peter Hulin asked if the qualifications would be added later. Chief Andrew Henning replied that NFPA 25 and ITM qualifications were two different topics. ITM qualifications are not a topic for discussion today; they are discussing replacing NFPA 25 2013 California edition with NFPA 25 2026 with state amendments. Regarding the ITM certification process, staff is still working on "Phase 2" of the certification system. They are working on a proposal to bring back to the committee based on the input received from the committee about a year ago. Member Vahe Zohrabian asked if they were going to do

two rulemakings, first for NFPA 25 and another to define who is qualified. The language in title 19 details testing from NFPA 25 2011 and how NFPA 2026 can be adopted without addressing those changes.

Chief Jeffery Schwartz asked if this was regarding section 901 in title 19 chapter 5, not the certification section in chapter 5.5. Chairperson Bennett agreed and added that both sections could be intertwined in the new version of NFPA 25 that requires some sort of certification or ITM. Member Vahe Zohrabian replied that most of Title 19 5.5 is about testing and forms of water-based systems. He does not see how they can adopt NFPA 25 2026 without making changes to all of Title 19.

3. NEW BUSINESS

Member David Karrick stated that a couple of individuals have completed the apprenticeship program but are unable to verify their hours with previous employers due to bad relationships or multiple previous employers. The application process requires the completion of an apprenticeship program, which has its own requirement of between 7000 and 9000 hours. In their mind, successful completion of the apprenticeship shows that they have worked the minimum hours. Is the hours verification necessary when the completion of the apprenticeship program requires the minimum hours worked? Why do the hours need to be verified twice? With all the other things they are looking at changing, this should be addressed as well. Member Amber Barrios added that they have had similar conversations with David Karrick and Patricia Rock about an individual who cannot get their hours verified until they return to California. He graduated from CAFSA and passed the exam, but no employer will verify their hours. The individual had left on bad terms with their previous employers and is now working out of state. Member David Karrick added that removing administrative hurdles is something that they should look at removing. When an individual has completed all the training requirements, but bad relationships with previous employers are stopping them from signing off on the worked hours letter seems counterintuitive to the program. A self-funded program does not need the highest level of gatekeeping possible when it comes to certifying individuals. Chairperson Bennett stated that the discussion topic is removing the employee verification portion of the sprinkler fitter application and relying on the apprenticeship completion certificate. Members David Karrick and Amber Barrios agreed. Member David Karrick added that the requirement to be employed in California probably shouldn't exist either. Some individuals could potentially come to California and work, but unless they have gainful employment in the state of California with a C-16 contractor, they don't qualify to get that certification. All the employer-type items should be removed.

Member Randy Roxson added that removing the employment requirements would assist public entities that employ sprinkler fitters but do not have a C-16 license. Fitters who complete the certification process and then move out of state should still be able to obtain and hold that license. Member Shelley Merrell asked if it was possible to use W-2s as proof of employment. Chairperson Bennett replied that there

are a lot of rules around the use of a W-2 and that it is not something the offices want to handle. Member Amber Barrios added that they know of a fitter who works for UCSV and is not employed by a C-16 contractor, but a C-16 contractor sponsored them to be able to complete the apprenticeship program. They also work with several fitters who are not in the industry right now but want to maintain their licenses. Member Matthew McCarrick, the CSLB C-16 license has an experience requirement, and the work experience just needs to be filled out by someone who has seen you work. Would it be possible to remove the requirement that it has to be from the C-16 license holder and just have the work experience verified by someone who saw them do the work? Member Vahe Zohrabian asked why a fitter's livelihood is contingent on a C-16 when the fitter is the one who completed the apprenticeship program and passed the exam. Member Amber Barrios asked if the hours could be verified by contacting the program.

Chairperson Bennett asked which was more important, the proof of completion of an apprenticeship program or the hours verification. Member Amber Barrios replied that the proof of completion was more important. Member David Karrick replied that proof of completion verifies the hours because each apprenticeship program is required to have standards, and one of those standards is hours worked. Even if that program is crediting an individual for previous hours worked by having them take an entrance exam. Member Amber Barrios noted that there could be issues with private programs because a program can get federal approval with as little as 3,500 hours. Because of this, the hours required for each program would need to be verified. Member David Karrick replied that programs could have their standards verified by the committee, then the proof of completion would meet the requirements for the hours as well. Then the secondary verification of the PoE letter could be removed. Members David Karrick and Amber Barrios both stated that their standards of required hours were available online. Member Randy Roxson added that the OSFM should have or be able to obtain the required hours from private apprenticeship programs. They added that they did not know why employment verification was required when a person had proof of completion of an approved apprenticeship program. If a person has completed the apprenticeship program and can pass the examination, they should be able to get their certification.

Member Peter Hulin asked, if before someone was allowed to take the exam, their hours were verified. Member Amber Barrios replied that they changed the testing process last year. Now, anyone can take the test but, when they schedule the test, they confirm that they have met the requirements for the license. Their hours are verified when they submit their application after taking the exam. Member David Karrick stated that before the change, to take the exam, proof of completion of an apprenticeship program was required. Then, after passing the exam, the verification letter from the employer was required. Public Guest Steven Miles stated that they provide a letter for people when people move from an apprentice to journeyman. Could the requirements be where the applicant can provide proof of completion or an hour's verification letter to have an alternative option. Member Randy Roxson asked what the letter would be an alternative to. Public Guest Steven Miles replied removing

the attestation from the employer will take time due to the regulation process. Would it be easier to say that the required documentation to become a journeyman sprinkler fitter could be the proof of completion of an apprenticeship, or proof of employment experience and hours letter. Chairperson Bennett stated that the office does not need a motion to explore removing this requirement, which the committee has identified as redundant.

Member Vahe Zohrabian initiated a discussion on strategies to assist non-union, out-of-state fire sprinkler fitters. Subsequently, Members Zohrabian and Peter Hulin addressed the comparative volume of actively licensed non-union versus union fire sprinkler fitters. Chairperson Bennett then redirected the discussion to the primary topic of supporting out-of-state fire sprinkler fitters. Member Randy Roxson stated that completing an approved apprenticeship should be enough; employment verification should not be required. Member Amber Barrios replied that they believe the verification of employment requirement may have been a part of the grandfathering process. Member Randy Roxson agreed and stated that they believe the regulations also address people coming in from out of state who have completed an apprenticeship program. Chairperson Bennett thanked their committee for their agreement on the topic, and the staff will explore this topic. They will have to see what would be affected by changing it and work with their partners at the CSLB to ensure they are both looking at the licensure the same way.

Member Vahe Zohrabian stated that in a previous meeting, they had agreed to talk about a status or employer listing for when a sprinkler fitter gets injured or is out of the industry for a while. It would allow them to maintain their license and continue to receive information about the industry. Member Vahe Zohrabian motioned it, and Member Amber Barrios seconded it. The interaction was noted on Page 8 of the July Meeting minutes. Chairperson Bennett apologized and replied that they are not prepared to talk about that topic at this time.

4. OPEN FORUM

Member Jason McBroom thanked the members of the NFPA 25 workgroup for all the work they did.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Guest Anthony Romero stated that their constituents and contractors in their area have been asking questions about the licensing requirements for Captive Air systems. Regarding the low voltage requirements for installing the system and Captive Air does not want people touching their systems without training, which means there are very few people who can do maintenance on them. What should the licensing requirement be for performing maintenance on Captive Air systems? The systems are UL300 and fall under the California Fire Code 904. Where in the fire code or maintenance forms does it talk about maintenance on low-voltage systems? The maintenance manuals talk about low-voltage, using low-voltage meters to check certain things, and batteries. Is a low-voltage license required to perform maintenance on these systems? They have reached out to

CSLB to try to get direction from them regarding their C-10 low voltage license. They want to be able to inform their contractors of what they can and cannot perform maintenance on. Public Guest Anthony Romero introduced themselves to the committee.

Chairperson Bennett added that Captive Air systems are fully digital systems using sensors and buttons to trigger; there are no fusible links, cables, or pulleys. Member Matthew McCarrick stated that they would treat it the same as an engineered system that uses an alarm plus fire protection. A C-10 and C-16 would be required. Public Guest Anthony Romero replied that the maintenance forms required for the local AHJs do not have anything about low voltage. Neither does the licensing process for the C-16 or C-10, or the portions of the fire code they have looked at. Member Matthew McCarrick replied that if they treat it like an engineered system and not a pre-engineered system, the electrical and mechanical would be included. Public Guest Anthony Romero asked if the 6-month, 12-month, and 1-year maintenance would be included. Member Matthew McCarrick replied that it would.

Public Guest Anthony Romero asked the committee if both licenses would be required. Public Guest David Lewandowski stated that most manufacturers have a low voltage version of their mechanical systems. Member Vahe Zohrabian stated that air ventilation systems require a C-20 license, and a C-10 or C-7 would also be required. For the life and safety version and testing, NFPA 72 would be required. Public Guest Anthony Romero stated that they agreed with requiring both licenses. The issue is that Captive Air is only letting certain people work on their systems. Additionally, these types of systems are not mentioned in the AES fire code. When it comes to enforcement, how do they enforce this process? They know when someone shows up to do a 6-month maintenance, and they don't have a C-10 or C-7, they can't. Public Guest Anthony Romero acknowledged Member Jason McBroom for pointing out 904.3.1. Public Guest David Lewandowski stated that all major manufacturers require training to work on and install their systems. Public Guest Anthony Romero agreed, but because this system is so new, they do not have anyone who has been through the training. Member Matthew McCarrick added that a C-10 is required for working on Gaylord systems. Member Jose Colin asked if a C-16 was required from ITM on these systems. Chief Jeffery Schwartz replied that a C-16 or an AES Type A2 was required. Chairperson Bennett thanked Public Guest Anthony Romero for bringing up this topic. Public Guest Anthony Romero said they would share what they learned with CSLB.

Member Peter Hulin asked if there was an employer reporting requirement, where an employer must notify the state if they have someone working for them with a sprinkler fitter card. Member Amber Barrios replied that the person is currently out of state. Member Peter Hulin asked if the hours the person was trying to verify were from when they worked in the state. Member Amber Barrios replied that that is correct. Member Peter Hulin stated that the employer should have notified the state when that person started working for them and when they stopped. They don't understand why so much is done to protect employers when they are not doing what is required of them.

Public Guest Jon Joseph agreed with the recommendation that an hour's verification is not needed when proof of completion of an apprenticeship program has been provided. Where an hour's verification is important is when a person is being evaluated by an apprenticeship program for their placement. Chairperson Bennett again thanked the committee for their agreement on this topic, and the office would be looking into.

6. UPCOMING MEETING DATES FOR 2024

- A. January 28th, 2025, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM Pacific Daylight Time (PDT)**
Pipeline Safety (Long Beach Office) 3780 Kilroy Airport Way, 5th Floor, McKittrick Conference Room (Room 512) Long Beach, CA 90806

7. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Member Jason McBroom to adjourn the meeting, motion seconded by Member Edie Wade; all in favor of adjournment. Chairperson Brice Bennett adjourned the meeting at 2:43 P.M. PDT.

This notice and copies of the written materials have been posted on the Office of the State Fire Marshal website <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/>. For information concerning the Committee meeting, please contact the OSFM Automatic Extinguishing Systems Program at aes@fire.ca.gov. Any written reports being provided to the Committee members in advance of the public meeting will also be available to the public upon request.

In accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, reasonable accommodations are available. Request for reasonable accommodations should be made at least five (5) working days prior to the meeting date. To request reasonable accommodations, including documents in alternative formats, please contact the OSFM Automatic Extinguishing Systems Program at aes@fire.ca.gov.