FIRE ALARM WORK GROUP
Meeting Minutes – November 3, 2026
Posted – November 20, 2026

Contacts:
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I. CALL TO ORDER – 8:31 AM PST

A. Welcome/Introductions – Chrishana Fields
1. Deputy State Fire Marshal III Specialist Chrishana Fields called the meeting to order and advised that Co-Chair Joseph Cervantes was unavailable for the meeting.
2. Adrienne Janowiak (OSFM-CDA) read a statement that provided notice that the meeting would be recorded, with a link to the recording to be included in the meeting minutes. She reviewed meeting protocols, including keeping microphones muted unless called upon, using the raise hand feature to request the floor, refraining from using AI note-taking tools, and maintaining respectful and professional dialogue throughout the session.

B. Agenda / Minutes Review
1. Chrishana Fields stated that the agenda and previous minutes were posted on the CDA Work Groups page
2. The agenda was displayed and received no request for changes.
   i. Motion to approve was made by Christopher Creamer and seconded by Shane Clary. With no opposition, the motion carried.
3. The October 20, 2026 minutes were displayed and received no request for changes.
   i. Motion to approve was made by Christopher Creamer and seconded by Shane Clary. With no opposition, the motion carried.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. There was no old business.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Subgroups
1. Educational Occupancies - David Secoda
   i. David Secoda reported no update beyond recent correspondence. Greg Cobabe (DSA) said he had reviewed the work group's proposals from the intervening cycle that were not advanced. DSA had concerns and sought clarification. A meeting on the proposals was scheduled for Thursday at 10:00 AM.

ii. Sagiv Weiss-Ishai, who chaired the original staff group, summarized the background. The group spent many meetings and hours on the proposals. The Fire Alarm Advisory Committee approved them, and the larger work group then voted, with a majority wishing to move them to the intervening cycle. DSA input had not yet been obtained, so the work was paused. The Thursday meeting was intended to gather DSA comments, make adjustments if needed, and move the proposals toward the triennial cycle.
iii. Greg Cobabe clarified that DSA has authority over public schools (K–12) and community colleges in California and therefore has a vested interest. He recalled that the vote had been a majority for further study, not for advancement. He said the group should revisit all of the proposals with DSA.
iv. David Secoda described the four proposals:
    a. A cleanup of Group E requirements, including a change to voice evacuation requirements that had caused difficulty for AHJs.
    b. Coordinating edits to Group A and Group B.
    c. Elimination of the California amended requirement for an exterior horn near the playground of public school campuses.
    d. An interpretation requiring smoke detection in obscure locations in public schools only.
v. Shane Clary said he had not supported some of the earlier intervening cycle actions and wished to review the proposals before taking a position. Chrishana Fields invited him to the Thursday meeting. Sagiv Weiss-Ishai agreed to add him to the invite, although Shane Clary said he would be traveling.
vi. David Secoda asked how the work could be shared outside of email. Chrishana Fields replied there was no other method at this time but said she would provide the email list of those subscribed to the Fire Alarm work groups. She invited anyone wanting the Thursday invite to put their email in the chat or contact her directly.

2. ESS Heat Detector - Akilan Ananth, Joshua Costello, and Mitchell Daudert
    i. Akilan Ananth reported that Michael Huang (OSFM-FEI) had given the Fire Alarm Advisory Committee an update. Michael is working with the testing labs on confirmation of the detector listings, and the matter now rests with him. Sagiv Weiss-Ishai explained that the issue concerns fire code Section 1207, which requires fire detection for energy storage systems in unconditioned R-3 garages. Garage temperatures can exceed 100°F, and many smoke and heat alarms are not listed for such ambient temperatures. The State Fire Marshal had issued an information bulletin advising reasonable consideration of device listings.
    ii. Akilan Ananth said two manufacturers advertise devices as listed for garage use above 100°F but the UL listing conflicts, and that the bulletin needs updating. He added that an update to the UL 539 standard (8th edition) was pending and no devices were yet listed to it. The Chair agreed to follow up with Michael Huang and report status at the next meeting. The matter would be handled through the Fire Alarm Advisory Committee, with this work group receiving status reports only.

3. Air-Moving Systems Subgroup - Joseph Cervantes
    i. Chrishana Fields deferred this subgroup to the CMC 609 discussion later in the meeting.

4. Carbon Monoxide Detection – Pending
    i. Chrishana Fields stated that a volunteer was still needed to review the intervening cycle carbon monoxide proposals that did not advance. Shane Clary suggested Richard Roberts, who is involved in carbon monoxide issues and the CEO coalition, and offered to contact him. Akilan Ananth noted that Richard Roberts' proposal appeared to have been implemented in the next IFC edition. David Secoda recalled that the intervening cycle proposal was to bring model code language forward early.
    ii. Chrishana Fields said she would check whether the language is already in the 2027 code, which might make the subgroup unnecessary. She will report back at the next meeting.

5. Heat vs. Smoke Detector - Sagiv Weiss-Ishai
    i. Sagiv Weiss-Ishai shared his screen to present work from a Fire Alarm Advisory Committee task group on fire code Section 907.4.3. That section allows heat detection in spaces where smoke detectors cannot be used because of ambient conditions. The task group concluded that heat detectors should replace smoke detectors for area detection only. Where a smoke detector activates a smoke-related fire safety function, such as door holders, elevator recall, or smoke dampers, substituting a heat detector defeats the function's purpose.
    ii. His draft code language has two parts:
        a. Where smoke detection is for area detection only and does not activate a smoke-related function under Section 907.3, smoke detectors are used unless ambient conditions prohibit, in which case heat detectors are permitted.
        b. Where a detector activates a smoke-related fire safety function, a UL 268 listed smoke detector suitable for the environment must be used. He noted that UL 268 listed multi-criteria detectors exist that can tolerate harsh environments.
    iii. The draft was presented as a work in progress. Shane Clary asked for the document to be shared in the chat so he could read it before taking a position. Foster McLean asked where a "smoke related fire safety function" is defined. Sagiv Weiss-Ishai answered that no specific definition exists, but Section 907.3 addresses fire safety functions generally and other code sections require detectors for smoke dampers and doors. Foster McLean said he would review that section.
    iv. Chrishana Fields clarified that the Fire Alarm Advisory Committee had returned the matter to Code Development and Analysis for a code interpretation. The purpose of this subgroup was to see whether the code text could be made clearer. Greg Cobabe, Kevin Scott, and Akilan Ananth volunteered and were assigned to assist. Others were asked to email Sagiv Weiss-Ishai.

B. Review CMC 609 Code Change Proposal
    1. Chrishana Fields introduced the proposal drafted by Joseph Cervantes. It follows discussion at the CAFAA–State Fire Marshal roundtable about HVAC shutdown, including what constitutes a compartment or enclosed space. She noted that mechanical code (Part 4) proposals must be submitted earlier than Parts 2 and 9. The proposal had been submitted to the economist for cost review pending this work group's approval and could be pulled. It must reach the Building Standards Commission by February 1, and a decision would be needed before the end of November.
    2. Enclosed space definition. The proposed definition read: a room or area bounded by walls, floor, and ceiling, where areas between which supply, return, or transfer air passes are considered a single enclosed space. Chrishana Fields acknowledged that a sentence limiting the definition to Section 609 had been omitted from the draft.
        i. Kevin Scott said the definition was too limiting and could cause confusion because the term is used in the building and fire codes without definition. He recommended keeping only the first sentence as a definition and putting the air connection criteria in the Section 609 text.
        ii. Shane Clary expressed concern about a California-unique definition that had not gone through the ICC process, particularly for designers working in multiple states.
        iii. Chrishana Fields said the proposal was intended to resolve field confusion over when spaces are combined for the 2,000 CFM threshold. She said it could also potentially inform California's ICC code change proposals.
        iv. Akilan Ananth noted that "air-moving system" is already defined in the mechanical code and should also be reviewed.
    3. Air-moving systems and Section 609.1. The proposed language states that where two or more air-moving systems supply the same enclosed space or connect through a common duct, plenum, or outdoor air source, their combined airflow determines whether the 2,000 CFM threshold is exceeded. Each system must then have automatic shutoff, accomplished by interrupting power or by hardwired connection under Section 609.1.3. Detection of smoke by smoke detectors serving the enclosed space would shut off all air-moving systems supplying it.
        i. Shane Clary said the combined-airflow clarification added clarity and he was not opposed. He asked what effect the language has where duct detectors are already installed alongside area detection, and said he wished to hear from the author.
        ii. David Secoda said it was his first time seeing the language and that it read more like an installation standard than a code requirement.
        iii. Greg Cobabe said the language aligned with DSA's interpretation. He noted that "any" smoke detector is ambiguous and suggested specifying all duct detectors or automatic shutoffs serving the space.
        iv. Joel Reitz welcomed the clarification, noting that designers often fail to combine multiple fan coil units serving one area. He cautioned against limiting detection to duct detectors and supported letting designers choose appropriate area or duct detection. He opposed Exception 1 (total coverage smoke detection), which would require detectors above ceilings

and add cost and maintenance. Chrishana Fields noted that Exception 1 is existing California amendment language.

v. Exceptions 2 and 3 were unchanged. Exception 4 was added so that automatic shutoff is not required for air-moving systems that are part of an approved smoke control system under Section 609.1.4.

vi. Kevin Scott noted that "return air" was stricken and replaced with "supply air" in places and said the entire document needed review.

4. The author, Joseph Cervantes, was unavailable. Chrishana Fields said she would distribute the document to subscribed members, since it could not be attached in the chat for external attendees. She would also try to schedule a separate subgroup meeting. David Secoda noted that proposals were distributed as attachments to the meeting minutes during the intervening cycle and suggested marking them as draft work product. Chrishana Fields said she would discuss this with leadership, as such attachments had previously caused confusion in another work group.

C. Review of Chapter 9 of the 2027 International Building Code and International Fire Code for potential CA Amendments

1. Chrishana Fields displayed a spreadsheet listing every Chapter 9 section that California has amended or added, with changed language shown in blue italics. The purpose is to determine whether each California amendment is still needed in light of the 2027 IBC and IFC. No work group exists yet, and Chrishana Fields asked for volunteers to review the spreadsheet. Shane Clary volunteered. Sagiv Weiss-Ishai asked that the Excel file be sent to him, and Chrishana Fields added him to the subgroup and agreed to send it.

D. ERCES Continuous Monitoring

1. Kevin Persing, representing a monitoring company, presented via screen share. He said emergency responder communications systems, which are life-safety systems also used by EMS and police, do not receive the monitoring and repair follow-up applied to sprinkler and smoke detection systems. Alarms at the bi-directional amplifier typically sit in a locked fire control room or at a remote annunciator that may be silenced, and failures such as cut coax or battery faults may go unnoticed until the annual inspection. He described monitoring technology that watches amplifier dry contacts and SNMP traps, and sends pulse signals to each antenna every 90 seconds. It notifies the responsible integrator automatically when failures occur. He said some Bay Area cities already require antenna monitoring.
2. Kevin Persing asked whether a group of fire code officials could be formed to draft vendor-neutral language on monitoring. He noted that CFC Section 104.2.3 allows alternative methods and said electronic monitoring could reduce the cost of annual inspections, currently about $5,000–$8,000 for some buildings. In response to Chrishana Fields' inquiry about an ICC change proposal, he said he was working with the ICC and NFPA on the issue. David Secoda asked whether the technology was proprietary. Kevin Persing said it was not, and that the main goal is to get alarms out of the fire control room to a place where they can be acted upon.
3. Shane Clary raised several concerns. He wanted the Safer Buildings Coalition and the NFPA 1225 technical committee to be involved, rather than California

acting alone. He asked whether such signals would be trouble or supervisory signals, and what response would be required. He also warned of nuisance signals, recalling a past cycle in which monitoring cell sites every 5 minutes became unmanageable. Kevin Persing replied that he had served four years on the Safer Buildings Coalition board and that the 90-second interval was a vendor solution, not a proposed code requirement.

4. Sagiv Weiss-Ishai noted that CFC Section 510.4.2.5 requires monitoring of ERCES, but passive components such as antennas and coax are not required to be monitored. San Francisco has added this requirement locally. He supported forming a task force to consider changes in California ahead of national code and NFPA 1225 changes, including a possible reduction in required annual inspections where continuous monitoring exists. No formal action was taken.

IV. ROUNDTABLE/PUBLIC COMMENT

A. No questions or comments.

V. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

A. Meetings are held every two weeks on Tuesday from 8:30 AM to 10:00 AM PST
B. Next meeting: November 19, 2026
C. Upcoming meetings - Tentative:
    1. December 1, 2026
    2. December 15, 2026
    3. January 5, 2027
    4. January 19, 2027
D. Follow up items
    1. Distribution of the CMC 609 draft to members, and possible scheduling of a separate subgroup meeting.
    2. Sending the Chapter 9 amendment spreadsheet to volunteers.
    3. Report on ESS heat detector bulletin status and the carbon monoxide language in the 2027 code.

VI. MEETING ADJOURNMENT – 9:58 AM PST

A. Chrishana Fields thanked attendees and the meeting was adjourned.

*Please subscribe to the “OSFM Committee and Workgroup Updates” mailing list to receive updates

If you would like to watch the recording of this meeting, please visit the link below:
https://youtu.be/mRFPwugxN-U

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