

**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

AGENDA REQUEST

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Phil Cecere, Fire Marshal Building Official
Brian Tracer, Deputy Fire Marshal

DATE: March 10, 2025

SUBJECT: WORKSHOP re: Fire Marshal Program Updates and 2025 Workplan

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

Each department of Jefferson County has been asked to brief the Board of County Commissioners on their respective 2025 workplans. The Department of Community Development (DCD) held this workplan February 18, 2025.

ANALYSIS:

Jefferson County DCD previously presented a 2025 workplan. The Office of the Fire Marshal and Building Official reside inside of DCD. Unfortunately, the Fire Marshal was participating in a legislative steering committee kickoff meeting for the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) mapping. Staff would like an opportunity to update the Board on milestones reached and present new goals and challenges that lie ahead for 2025 and beyond.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no direct fiscal impact for this workshop.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Board grant the workshop for the 2025 workplan for the Office of the Fire Marshal and provide discussion, feedback and direction as needed.

REVIEWED BY:


Mark McCauley, County Administrator

2/26/25
Date



FIRE MARSHAL - BUILDING OFFICIAL

Workshop for 2025 Annual Workplan

As presented to the Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners
3/10/2025

PHIL CECERE, FIRE MARSHAL - BUILDING OFFICIAL

BRIAN TRACER, DEPUTY FIRE MARSHAL

Department of Community Development
(DCD)
Organizational Chart 2025 Q1

Jefferson County, WA Residents
Board of County Commissioners
County Administrator



Updated 2/4/2025

WHY ARE WE HERE TODAY?

- On February 18, 2025, DCD presented a workplan to the BOCC.
- Phil was participating in a SB 6120 Legislative Steering Committee kickoff meeting for the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) mapping, and was not present for the BoCC- DCD annual workplan presentation. Jefferson County was chosen as a rural jurisdiction on the west side of the state with a large interface with private and public owned forested lands.
- Talk through some of the successes and challenges that lie ahead for our team in 2025.
- Discuss the Commercial fire life-safety inspection program and possible resolution.
- Discuss Community Rating System (CRS) enrollment requirements for Floodplain Management



WHAT DOES THE FIRE MARSHAL DO?

JCC 2.40.020 DUTIES AND AUTHORITY OF THE FIRE MARSHAL.

(1) THE FIRE MARSHAL SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY INSPECTIONS, FIRE AND ARSON INVESTIGATION, PLAN REVIEW FOR COMPLIANCE WITH FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY REGULATIONS, AND OTHER ASSOCIATED DUTIES, AS FURTHER DESCRIBED IN JCC 15.05.020. (5) THE FIRE MARSHAL SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY DUTIES ASSIGNED UNDER JEFFERSON COUNTY CODE TO THE FIRE CODE OFFICIAL OR TO THE FIRE MARSHAL.

THE FIRE MARSHAL OFFICE IS THE COUNTY AUTHORITY HAVING JURISDICTION (AHJ) AND IS RESPONSIBLE AS THE FIRE CODE OFFICIAL

- FIRE PLAN REVIEW
- INSPECTIONS
- INVESTIGATIONS
- ADDRESSING AND ROAD NAMING
- ENFORCEMENT OF BURNING REGULATIONS PER JCC 8.72.050
- MONITOR ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS AND COMMUNICATE WITH INTERESTED PARTIES
- ESTABLISHES FIRE DANGER RISK LEVELS AND CORRESPONDING RESTRICTIONS PER JCC 8.72.040



WHAT DOES THE BUILDING OFFICIAL DO?

JCC 15.05.020 Administration and enforcement of code.

(1) The Jefferson County building official is charged with the administration and enforcement of the Jefferson County building code ordinance. The building official may retain necessary personnel, conduct inspections and investigations, issue permits, maintain necessary records and files, and do or cause to be done all things necessary and proper for the administration and enforcement of the Jefferson County building code ordinance.

A building official is responsible for enforcing building codes within a jurisdiction, overseeing the issuance of construction permits, managing building inspections, and ensuring all construction projects comply with safety regulations, essentially acting as the primary authority on code compliance within their area of responsibility; their role is typically supervisory, managing a team of building inspectors to carry out the inspections on site.

- Manages inspection program
- Provides plan review or oversight
- Enforces building codes and safety regulations
- Issues permits
- Serves as the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ)
- Issues interpretations of the building code and modifications as prudent



BUILDING TEAM & OFFICE OF THE FIRE MARSHAL

2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- TRANSITIONED TO NEW BUILDING CODE CYCLE; MANAGED CORRESPONDING SPRING PERMIT APPLICATION SURGE
- PLAN REVIEW- APPROX. 444 PLAN REVIEWS (40 CONSULTANT SUPPORT)
- ADDRESS CASES 115 CASE REVIEWS
- INSPECTIONS - 3,904 INDIVIDUAL INSPECTIONS (NOT TOTAL SITE VISITS)
- FIRE INVESTIGATIONS - 13 INVESTIGATED FIRES
- CONTINUING EDUCATION TO MAINTAIN RATINGS BUREAU GRADE, DEVELOP INTERNAL SKILLS & CAPACITY
- STAFF CUMULATIVELY TESTED OUT 3 NEW ICC CERTIFICATIONS: COMMERCIAL BUILDING INSPECTOR, FIRE PLAN EXAMINER AND FIRE INSPECTOR II
- ONE STAFF MEMBER PROMOTED FROM INSPECTOR I TO INSPECTOR II
- FIRE DANGER RATINGS AND BURN RESTRICTION LEVELS
- ACQUISITION OF FIRE MARSHAL VEHICLE
- ACQUISITION OF SURFACE TABLETS & TYLER FIRE MOBILE
- STR ANNUAL INSPECTION PROGRAM FOR STRs PERMITTED PRE-MORATORIUM

2025 GOALS

- STOCK PLANS – GO “LIVE” WITH PROGRAM
- DRAFT ILA WITH LOCAL FIRE DISTRICTS
- C-PACER PROMOTION – GRANT-FUNDED
- ESTABLISHING PRIVATE ROAD AND DRIVEWAY ACCESS STANDARDS
- ADDRESSING E911 ORDINANCE UPDATE
- CWPP IMPLEMENTATION
- WUI INTEGRATION WITH CWPP
- STR ANNUAL INSPECTION PROGRAM
- COMMERCIAL FIRE LIFE-SAFETY INSPECTION PROGRAM
- FIRE FLOW AND FIRE HYDRANT SPACING CODE UPDATE
- INSPECTION COMBINATION TO REDUCE SITE VISITS AND IMPROVE EFFICIENCY
- ADDITION OF CLERK HIRE FOR ON-CALL BUILDING AND LIFE-SAFETY INSPECTIONS AND SPECIAL PROJECTS
- POTENTIAL ADDITION OF WILDFIRE SAFETY COORDINATOR- GRANT FUNDED



COMMERCIAL INSPECTION PROGRAM

JCC 15.05.046 Commercial fire safety inspection program.

(1) Purpose. The purpose of the commercial fire safety inspection program is to ensure that commercial buildings and other premises and occupancy classes meet fire safety standards necessary to protect employees, occupants, and the public; and to provide legally mandated fire code enforcement, as required by the Washington State Fire Marshal's Office and Chapter 51-54A WAC.

(2) Inspection. The fire marshal shall develop a commercial fire safety inspection program to ensure fire safety in commercial buildings and other premises and occupancy classes which the fire marshal determines should have periodic inspections to ensure fire safety. The fire marshal or their designee shall conduct inspections of commercial buildings and other premises and occupancy classes in Jefferson County to ensure compliance with the International Fire Code, as now or hereafter adopted and amended pursuant to this title. The fire marshal shall determine the frequency of inspections based on the hazards associated with each type of occupancy and as may be mandated by Chapter 51-54A WAC.

(3) Authority to Enter Into Interlocal Agreements. The fire marshal is authorized to enter into interlocal agreements and other contracts with fire districts, municipal governments, or other private or public entities as may be mutually beneficial to implement an effective commercial fire safety inspection program for Jefferson County.

(4) Fees. The fire marshal may collect reasonable fees to cover the cost of the commercial fire safety inspection program. Fees shall be adopted pursuant to Chapter 3.80 JCC. [Ord. 5-23 § 5]



COMMERCIAL INSPECTION PROGRAM, cont.

Program based upon Washington Survey and Ratings Bureau (WSRB) guidelines NFPA AND IFC recommendations

Insurance underwriter driven

Goal of annual site inspection of every business

Realistic goal of every other year and a self inspection report in off years

Some more complicated businesses physically inspected annually- high hazard or high occupancy buildings

Fees collected by approved fee schedule adopted consistent with JCC 15.05.046 and JCC 3.80 fees further supported by DCD fee study to establish reasonable fees

Board previously directed no food truck inspections these are a requirement of the 2021 IFC

Inspections have begun and will commence via ZIP code; South County selected for a variety of reasons: mainly, a small sample size and lack of historical data



DEFICIENCY HAZARD CORRECTION MATRIX

EXTREME HAZARDS

***1 Hour to Correct the Hazard**

- *Locked / Blocked Exits
- *Over the Posted Occupancy Limit
- *Imminent Life or Fire Hazards

HIGH HAZARDS

***7 Days to Correct the Hazard. Follow-up Needed.**

- *Excessive Storage in Aisles
- *Fire System O.O.S.
- *Major Electrical Problems

MODERATE HAZARDS

***14 Days to Correct the Hazard. Follow-up Needed.**

- *Extinguisher Servicing
- *Exit lights and signs
- *Unapproved electrical cords

LOW HAZARDS

***30 Day Correct the Hazard. Follow-up Needed.**

- *Construction Issues
- *Fire Protection System Upgrades
- *Holes in fire rated walls.
- *Non-operational fire door assemblies
- *Other fire codes not-listed above



NEXT STEPS

- Anticipate a draft Resolution to outline the establishment of Commercial Inspection Program
- Continue Implementation of the program (inspections)
- Commence hiring and onboarding of a clerk hire
- Anticipate continued conversations and eventual ordinances related to: private road and driveway standards, hydrant spacing requirements, and fire flow requirements
- Propose ILA for each fire district interested in participating



2025 Annual Workplan

Fire Marshal - Building Official

*Presentation to Board of County
Commissioners
3/10/2025*



QUESTIONS?

