

Utah Fire Service Certification System

FIRE INVESTIGATOR



CERTIFICATION STANDARD

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Utah Fire Service Certification Council

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Scott Spencer, Chief

Payson Fire & Rescue

Vice-Chairperson

Jason Earl, Deputy Chief

Orem Fire Department

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TJ Brewer, Chief

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Uintah Fire Suppression SSD

Wade Snyder, Deputy Fire Management Officer

Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands

Merlin Spendlove, Battalion Chief

Hurricane Fire & Rescue

Rod “Hoss” Tomkinson, Assistant Chief

Logan Fire Department

Christopher Trevino, Deputy Chief

West Jordan Fire Department

David Youngberg, Battalion Chief

North Davis Fire District

Ted Black, Utah State Fire Marshal

Utah State Fire Marshal’s Office

Utah Fire & Rescue Academy Staff

Brad Wardle, Director

Jolene Chamberlain, Assistant Director

Joan Aaron, Program Manager

Certification Specialists

Jennifer Lindley – Northern Region

Trudy Meister – Central Region

Sharon Stokes – Salt Lake County/Southern Region

For questions or comments concerning this or other Utah certification standards contact:

Utah Fire Service Certification Council

Utah Fire & Rescue Academy

Utah Valley University

3131 Mike Jense Parkway

Provo, Utah 84601

Phone: 801-863-7709

Web: www.uvu.edu/ufra, Email: UFRACertification@uvu.edu

Fire Investigator Technical Committee

The Certification Council would like to recognize and extend a voice of appreciation to the following fire service professionals for their work on this Fire Investigator Certification Standard. These individuals devoted many hours to reviewing the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). 1033 standard, certification test banks and textbooks to develop the wording for the skills in this standard.

Thank You.

Fire Investigator Committee

Scott Spencer, Chief
Payson Fire & Rescue
* Certification Council Representative

Rod Hammer, Chief
Cache County Fire District
*Certification Council Representative

Mike Phillips, Chief
Cedar City Fire Department

Lynn Schofield, Fire Marshal
Provo Fire & Rescue

Pat Vega, Assistant Fire Chief
Hill Air Force Base – *Retired*
Clinton Fire Department

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INTRODUCTION

The Utah Fire and Rescue Academy (UFRA) has evolved into a dynamic organization that provides fire and emergency service–related training, professional accredited certification, and resource assistance. The Utah Fire Service Certification System (UFSCS) has been administered by UFRA since the system’s inception in the early 1980s. The governing body for the firefighter certification system in the state of Utah is the Utah Fire Service Certification Council (UFSCC). The members of the council represent various areas of the state as well as a variety of department types.

The entire system is based on international professional job performance standards from NFPA and NWCG. Fire service training must be utilized to its maximum potential. Any overlap, fragmentation, and lack of basic structure must be eliminated. Standardization is the natural complement and necessity. Through these national standards and certification, firefighters and fire departments have a tool to measure specific levels of skills, abilities, and knowledge. Testing takes place all over the state of Utah and is usually scheduled by fire department training officers for members of one or more local agencies to test at their own facilities using their own equipment.

The Utah Fire Service Certification System creates uniformity through certification. Certification allows a fire service professional to be a part of the National Registry (Pro Board and IFSAC), which verifies that a person has been trained at a national standard. Firefighters, hazardous materials responders, and rescue personnel can earn various certifications. Volunteer, part-time, and career firefighters must all meet the same standard to certify. Most fire departments in Utah have certified personnel even though there is no law requiring it.

“Certification from an accredited entity is a statement of success, an indisputable mark of performance belonging to individual fire service professionals. Each successful candidate for certification from an accredited entity knows that he or she has been measured against peers and meets rigorous national standards. Certification affords the individual a uniformity and portability of qualifications. In addition, the creditability of an organization is enhanced by having members certified to national consensus standards.”

—theproboard.org

IFSAC “provides accreditation to entities that certify the competency of and issue certificates to individuals who pass examinations based on National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) fire service professional qualifications and other standards approved by the Assembly.”

—ifsac.org

The following certification requirements are based on the objectives listed in Chapter 4 of NFPA 1033, Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator (National Fire Protection Association, 2022), as verified and adopted by the Utah Fire Service Certification Council (UFSCC).

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Entrance Requirements

In order to certify within the Utah Fire Investigator program, candidates must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Complete entrance requirements.
2. Set up and maintain department records.
3. Train on the required written and practical objectives in the specialty areas outlined in Chapter 7, “Confined Space Rescue.”
4. Pass an in-house practical skills examination for each specialty area.
5. Meet any other training requirements/prerequisites as defined by the Certification Council.
6. Pass both written and practical skills examinations administered by the Certification Council.
7. Request Technical Rescue Certification for each specialty area completed.
8. Request recertification at the end of each 3-year certification period.

Physical Fitness Requirements

The UFSCC acknowledges the importance of and need for physical fitness requirements as listed in NFPA 1033, *Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigators* (2022). Many agencies and departments have existing policies, regulations, etc. already in place regarding these requirements. The handling of physical fitness requirements is a **LOCAL MATTER**, outside the authority and jurisdiction of the UFSCC. The Council will not check, test, evaluate, or determine how individual agencies meet these requirements. Some departments have found it necessary to waive any type of physical fitness requirements due to their own special needs. As a local decision, this is permitted. However, due to the amount of physical, mental, and emotional stress inherent in this profession, **the Utah Fire Service Certification Council strongly recommends careful evaluation before altering or doing away with any existing physical fitness requirements.**

The requirements listed in NFPA 1033, 2022 edition, Chapter 1 are:

1. Meet the minimum educational requirements established by the authority having jurisdiction.
2. The Utah Fire Service Certification Council Policy 11.3 requires that a candidate must be at least 18 years of age to test and be certified.
3. Meet the medical requirements of NFPA 1582, *Standard on Comprehensive Occupational Medical Program for Fire Departments*, 2022 edition, as determined by the medical authority of the AHJ.
4. Physical fitness requirements for entry-level personnel should be developed and validated by the authority having jurisdiction. Physical fitness requirements should be in compliance with applicable Equal Employment Opportunity regulations and other legal requirements.
5. Prior to beginning training, a minimum medical training requirement should be met.
6. People having the potential for encountering hazardous materials on an incident scene should be trained to recognize the hazard and to implement exposure and control methods.
7. Meet psychological support/education requirements established by the authority having jurisdiction.

Additional Recommendation

Due to the nature of the role of a Fire Investigator, the Certification Council strongly suggests that Chief/Administrators conduct a background and character investigation for members of their agency who are tasked with the responsibility of being a Fire Investigator. NFPA 1033, 2022 edition, also makes this recommendation in 1.3.2.8. The position of Fire Investigator should be filled by an individual that could withstand an intense investigation by a defense attorney who would look to discredit an investigator. The cost for a background investigation is minimal and would be the responsibility of the agency requesting certification.

Department Training Officers

For a department to enroll in the certification process, it is necessary for the department to assign training officers. Departments who **do not** have certified personnel to act as training officers for certification training should contact the Utah Fire & Rescue Academy at (801) 863-7709 for assistance in setting up and monitoring certification training.

Department training instructors shall be certified at the level they are teaching. In addition, the Certification Council strongly recommends that training officers and instructors be state certified at the Instructor I level.

Department training officers or instructors will be responsible for certification training. Their primary responsibility will be to teach, evaluate, and in-house test department personnel on the skill and evolution requirements for each level of certification training.

The final entrance requirement is to complete the **Intent to Participate** form provided in Appendix C and return it to the Certification Council. Remember, participation in the certification process is **VOLUNTARY**. Once you have enrolled, you can withdraw if desired.

If a department is already participating in the Utah Fire Service Certification System, it will not be necessary to file another Intent to Participate form.

DEPARTMENT TRAINING

The position of Fire Investigator is one that requires a high level of skill and knowledge. The training that is given to and received by a Fire Investigator candidate should be of the highest quality and degree. All training received must meet the requirements of NFPA 1033 (2022), Chapter 4, and the skills as approved by the UFSCC contained within the Utah Standard. All training received must be documented and recorded in the Training Record. All testing for Fire Investigator will be conducted following the Policies and Procedures of the UFSCC.

Training for Fire Investigator can be obtained by completing one of the following training courses or methods to qualify to take the state examination.

1. A Fire Investigator I Course sponsored by the Utah Fire & Rescue Academy
2. ESFO 2310 – A Fire Investigator course taught by Utah Valley University/Utah Fire & Rescue Academy.
3. Department Based Training. Departments can create their own Fire Investigator course which meets the requirements as outlined in NFPA 1033 (2022), Chapter 4. A Training Record, as given in this standard, must be completed for each person involved in the department-based training.

To prepare the candidate to successfully pass the state certification examination, the course material should be based on Fire Investigator, 3rd edition (IFSTA, 2022); NFPA 1033, Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator (2022), Chapter 4; and NFPA 921, Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations (2021).

Written Objectives

Written objectives for Fire Investigator are covered in the following texts:

- *Fire Investigator*, 3rd Edition (IFSTA, 2022)
- NFPA 1033, *Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator* (2022), Chapter 4
- NFPA 921, *Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations* (2021)

These resources are available from various fire service bookstores or on the Internet. A list of current resources is available online at uvu.edu/ufra.

There are numerous methods departments have used to help prepare their personnel for the written examination. Considering the high level of skill and knowledge that is required of a Fire Investigator, the Council recommends that the candidate participate in a comprehensive class and receive instruction on both skills and written requirements.

Skill Objectives

Each candidate must be trained and evaluated in the performance of all skills as found in this Utah certification standard. Each of the skill objectives shall be completed swiftly, safely, and with competence as defined below:

- **Swiftly.** Each skill objective must be completed within the allotted time.
- **Safely.** Each skill objective must be completed safely. Conduct that could injure an individual or damage equipment is unacceptable. Equipment should be checked prior to skill testing or training to see that it is safe and functional.
- **With Competence.** Each skill objective is performed in accordance with the Utah certification standard. This includes performing the proper steps in sequence. Competence will be measured in accordance with the UFSCS skill objectives.

Department Training Records

Each candidate shall have a current, accurate, and complete Training Record on file with the department which indicates that they have been trained on all skill objectives. **The Training Record must be completed in its entirety to test.** Training Records may be completed on a computer or by hand. Departments may set up their own Training Records, use the one provided in this standard, or use the fillable Training Record found online on UFRA's website. If a department chooses to set up their own Training Record, it must meet the following requirements:

1. Indicate the certification level and its corresponding NFPA standard number and edition.
2. Include a signature line for the candidate, which attests that all skills have been trained on and a complete in-house comprehensive exam was administered and passed.
3. Include a signature line for the Chief/Training Officer, which attests that the candidate has been trained on all skills and a complete in-house comprehensive exam was administered and passed.
4. Include a line to record the date the Training Record was completed.
5. List all the skills from this Utah certification standard for this level. Include columns indicating the date of trainings, training instructors, the date of exams, exam instructors, and whether the candidate passed each exam (see the Training Records in this standard).

Department In-House Skills Examination

At the completion of the department's skills training, the department is required to hold an in-house skills examination for the level being trained. This is a comprehensive in-house skills test conducted by the department training officers. This test is to ensure that skill mastery has been maintained from the beginning to the end of the training process, and to prepare candidates for the state examination. Training officers may utilize other personnel to assist in administering the exam; however, they must be certified at the level they are in-house testing.

Proctor instructions for the examination are in Appendix B in this standard. In-house testers shall follow the proctor instruction sheet to provide uniformity and fairness during the exam. It is recommended that candidates be given two attempts at any skill. **If they fail on the second try, then they have failed the evaluation and are required to go through additional training by the department trainer.** No training, teaching, or coaching is allowed during the test. After the evaluation, using the test to teach and train is recommended.

If skill weaknesses are evident, the department should conduct additional training and hold a new department in-house skills examination to ensure their personnel have fully mastered all required skills. Only those individuals who successfully pass the department skills test will be allowed to participate in the Certification Council's skills spot check examination. Department records must show that all candidates have successfully passed the in-house exam.

CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS

After completion of the training process, the Chief/Administrator can request testing for the candidate using the Examination Request form in Appendix C. The candidate will then have three attempts to pass the written examination. A separate request must be sent to the Certification Office for each attempt. Request forms must reach the Certification Office no later than 30 days prior to the examination date. The entire examination process must be completed within one year of the first written exam date.

Written Examinations

The written examination is a randomly generated **100-question**, open book test using NFPA 1033 and NFPA 921, covering the written objectives of the Fire Investigator standard. A minimum score of 70% percent is required to pass the certification exam. Firefighters failing the first attempt of the written exam will be permitted to retest no sooner than **30 days** from the date of the last exam. Three attempts are allowed to pass the exam. If a candidate fails the written examination three times, they have failed the certification process and must wait one year from the date of the last failed exam before reentering testing. Exam results are forwarded to the Chief/Administrator within 30 days following the receipt of the completed exam.

SAMPLE WRITTEN EXAMINATION QUESTION:

Civil litigation lawsuits typically involve claims of damages for:

- a. Death.
- b. Injury
- c. Property damage
- d. All of the above**

Skills Spot Check Examinations

This is a two-step examination. The first step is a department records check and the second step is a skill spot check examination. A Certification Tester appointed by the Utah Fire Service Certification Council conducts the examination.

Training records are checked. If records are inadequate, corrective action must be taken before proceeding to the next step. The records must meet minimum requirements and are checked for the following:

1. Candidate has been trained in each skill for the level being evaluated.
2. A department training officer has signed off each skill.
3. Each candidate has passed a department in-house skills examination.

The skills and evolution spot check examination is graded on a 100% pass/fail basis. The test is graded in the following three areas:

- **Swiftly.** Each skill objective must be completed within the allotted time.
- **Safely.** Each skill objective must be completed safely. Conduct that could injure an individual or damage equipment is unacceptable. Equipment should be checked prior to skill testing or training to see that it is safe and functional.
- **With Competence.** Each skill objective must be performed in accordance with this Utah certification standard. This includes performing the proper steps in sequence. Competence will be measured in accordance with the UFSCS skill objectives.

Candidates are spot checked on **one evolution and one skill**. No prior notification of the evolution or skills being tested will be given.

Candidates are given two attempts to perform each skill/evolution. If they fail on the second attempt, the applicants must wait 30 days before the third and final attempt. Candidates taking third attempts will test on the skill/evolution they missed plus one additional skill from the section of the standard they failed in the previous two attempts. **No training, teaching, or coaching is allowed during this state test.**

- Candidates who have failed the third attempt of the written examination or the skills examination have failed the certification process and must wait **one year** from the date of the failed third attempt to reenter state testing. The candidate will begin testing with a new **first attempt** of the written examination, following a request for examination. If a candidate wishes to enter a new course, the candidate may petition the Certification Office to reenter the certification examination process no sooner than 120 days after their **third attempt** failure. In the petition, candidates must explain the reason(s) behind their request to reenter the process.

FIRE INVESTIGATOR CERTIFICATION

When all requirements for certification have been met, applicants are eligible to be certified. The chief/administrator may apply to the Utah Fire Service Certification Council for certification for those candidates who have successfully completed the certification training/testing process. Requests for state certification must be submitted to the Certification Office using the Certification/Recertification Request form provided in Appendix C. The names are then checked against the official state records to ensure that each individual listed has met all requirements and prerequisites.

Prerequisites for Fire Investigator Certification

There are no prerequisites for Fire Investigator certification. The previous requirements of Hazardous Materials Awareness and Fire Inspector I were removed by the Certification Council on March 17, 2021.

Recertification

Certification at the Fire Investigator level is valid for a three-year period. Each certified Fire Investigator may renew certification by having the Chief/Administrator of the participating agency submit a Certification/Recertification Request provided in Appendix C.

Each certified Fire Investigator shall participate in at least 36 hours of structured class and skill training per year. A total of 108 hours of training is required during the previous certification period.

For more information on Utah firefighter certification, contact the:

Utah Fire Service Certification Council
Utah Fire and Rescue Academy
3131 Mike Jense Parkway
Provo, Utah 84601
801-863-7709
www.uvu.edu/ufra

FIRE INVESTIGATOR CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS:

- ☐ Each candidate has met the requirements listed in NFPA 1033 (2022), Chapter 1.
- ☐ Department has filed an Intent to Participate form with the UFSCC.

DEPARTMENT TRAINING RECORDS:

- ☐ Each candidate has a Training Record on file with the department that shows:
 1. A learning experience in each skill objective
 2. Dates of training
 3. Initials of instructors
- ☐ Each candidate has trained on the Fire Investigator level written objectives.

DEPARTMENT IN-HOUSE SKILLS EXAMINATION:

- ☐ Each candidate has successfully completed an in-house skills and evolution examination.
- ☐ Exam results are documented in department training records.

CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS:

- ☐ Each candidate has passed the UFSCC written examination.
- ☐ Each candidate has passed the UFSCC skills and evolution examination.
- ☐ A spot check examination administered by an approved Certification Tester(s).

FIRE INVESTIGATOR - CERTIFICATION:

- ☐ The Chief/Administrator has requested certification for candidates using the Certification/Recertification Request.

FIRE INVESTIGATOR SKILL OBJECTIVES

SCENE EXAMINATION

1. **Demonstrate securing a fire ground/scene so that unauthorized persons can recognize the perimeters of the investigative scene and are kept from restricted areas and evidence, or potential evidence is protected from damage or destruction.**

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.2.1
NFPA 921, 2021 Edition, Chapters 1.1, 1.2, 4.3, 13.2.5.2, 17.3.4.1, 28.5.2.4.1

CONDITION: Given marking or barrier devices (i.e., tape, cones, or rope), special tools or equipment that would assist in establishing a perimeter.

COMPETENCE:

- Identify appropriate PPE (see Appendix A)
- Assess fire/explosion scene
- Determine initial scope and purpose of investigation
- Determine the size of the perimeter that is to be established
- Set up barrier devices
- Determine entry/exit point

TIME: 5 minutes

2. **Conduct an exterior survey so that evidence is preserved, fire damage is interpreted, hazards are identified, accessibility to the property is determined and all potential means of ingress and egress are discovered.**

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.2.2
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapters 13.1.2, 15.4.2, 15.4.3, 17.2.1, 17.3.1, 28.5.2.1

CONDITION: Given standard equipment and tools (see Appendix A for list of equipment).

COMPETENCE:

- Identify appropriate PPE (see Appendix A)
- Assess fire ground for safety hazards
- Assess structural conditions of building
- Observe and identify exterior damage and effects of the fire. Identify any burn patterns
- Identify and mark any evidence or potential evidence found on the exterior of the fire scene
- Determine entry/exit point for scene
- Control access into perimeter with police or firefighter if possible

TIME: 10 minutes

3. Conduct an interior survey so that areas of potential evidentiary value requiring further examination are identified and preserved, the evidentiary value of contents is determined, and hazards are identified to avoid injuries.

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.2.3
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapters 13.1, 15.4.2, 15.4.3, 17.2.1, 17.3.1, 18.3.1, 28.5.2.1

CONDITION: Given standard equipment, PPE, and tools (see Appendix A for list of equipment).

COMPETENCE:

- Wear appropriate PPE (see Appendix A)
- Assess fire ground for safety hazards
- Assess structural condition of building
- Observe and identify interior damage and effects of the fire
- Identify areas that require additional investigation
- Identify evidence or burn patterns affected by suppression efforts
- Evaluate all areas to determine presence and/or absence of contents
- Determine entry/exit point for scene
- Control access into perimeter with police or firefighter if possible

TIME: 10 minutes

4. Interpret two or more burn patterns so that each individual pattern is evaluated with respect to the burning characteristics of the material involved.

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.2.4, 4.2.5
NFPA 921, 2021 Edition, Chapter 6

CONDITION: Given standard equipment and tools (see Appendix A for list of equipment) and structural or content remains.

COMPETENCE:

- Wear appropriate PPE (see Appendix A).
- Identify the material involved in the fire.
- Identify movement and intensity patterns.
- Identify plume generated patterns.
- Identify ventilation generated patterns.
- Identify hot-gas layer generated patterns.
- Identify full-room involvement patterns.
- Identify burn patterns on horizontal surfaces.

TIME: 10 minutes

5. Correlate two or more burn patterns so that fire development is determined, methods and effects of suppression are evaluated, false areas of origin are eliminated, patterns are recognized, and area of origin is correctly identified.

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.2.4, 4.2.5 Scene Examination
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapters 6 and 18

CONDITION: Given investigative tools, equipment, and PPE, structural contents or remains (see Appendix A for list of equipment).

COMPETENCE:

- Wear appropriate PPE (see Appendix A).
- Interpret variations of burn pattern on different materials/surfaces.
- Contrast and compare burn patterns to determine their relevance to fire spread. (Eliminate patterns caused by suppression activities.)
- Identify fire patterns to determine area of origin.
- Identify area of low burn.
- Identify and summarize area of fire origin and fire development scenario.

TIME: 10 minutes

6. Examine and remove fire debris so that all debris is checked for fire cause evidence, the potential ignition source(s) is identified, and evidence is preserved without investigator-inflicted damage or contamination.

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.2.6
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapters 17, 18, 19, 20.2

CONDITION: Given investigative tools, equipment, and PPE, structural contents or remains. (Verbalize.)

COMPETENCE:

- Wear appropriate PPE (see Appendix A).
- Determine area to remove debris.
- Determine debris to be removed.
- Remove debris in systematic process, examine and facilitate documentation.
- Identify ignition source(s).
- Identify first fuel(s) ignited.
- Determine (to reasonable degree of certainty) the circumstances that brought the fuel and the ignition source together (fire cause).
- Describe the appropriate preservation of evidence.

TIME: 10 minutes

7. Reconstruct the area of origin so that all protected areas and burn patterns are identified and correlated to contents or structural remains, items potentially critical to cause determination and photo documentation are returned to their pre-fire location and the area(s) or point(s) of origin is discovered.

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.2.7
NFPA 921, 2021 Edition, Chapters 17, 18.3.2, 18.3.2.1, 19, 21.2

CONDITION: Given investigative tools, equipment, and PPE, structural contents or remains. (Verbalize/demonstrate.)

COMPETENCE:

- Wear appropriate PPE (see Appendix A).
- Re-create the scene with contents in their pre-fire location.
- Interpret fire growth patterns.
- Identify and document potential ignition sources.
- Identify and document potential first material ignited.
- Properly document and collect evidence.

TIME: 10 minutes

8. Inspect the performance of building systems including detection, suppression, HVAC, utilities and building compartmentalization so that a determination can be made as to the need for expert resources, an operating systems impact on fire growth and spread is considered in identifying origin areas, defeated and/or failed systems are identified and the system's potential as a fire cause is recognized.

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.2.8
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapters 7, 9, 10, 17

CONDITION: Given a scenario in a building, investigative tools, equipment, and PPE, structural contents or remains. (verbalize/demonstrate)

COMPETENCE:

- Wear appropriate PPE (see Appendix A).
- Identify which type(s) of building system(s) are present in a structure.
- Identify which systems are present in the area of origin.
- Determine if system(s) functioned properly.
- Determine if system(s) impacted fire behavior, growth or extension.
- Document system(s) identified.
- Contact "expert" resources if needed.

TIME: 20 minutes

9. Discriminate the effects of explosions from other types of damage so that an explosion is identified, and its evidence is preserved.

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.2.9
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapter 22

CONDITION: Given a scenario (4 photos), investigative tools, equipment, and PPE, structural contents or remains (see Appendix A for list of equipment). (Verbalize.)

COMPETENCE:

- Identify explosive effects on glass, walls, foundations, and other building materials.
- Distinguish between low and high order explosion damage.
- Examine scene and area of origin.

- Document items of evidence in area of origin and blast zone.

TIME: 10 minutes

DOCUMENTING THE SCENE

- 10. Diagram the scene so that the scene is accurately represented, and evidence, pertinent contents, significant patterns, and origin area(s) or point(s) are identified.**

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.3.1
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapters 6, 16, 17, 18

CONDITION: Given a scenario, investigative tools, paper, pencil, equipment, and PPE, structural contents or remains (see Appendix A for list of equipment).

COMPETENCE:

- Wear appropriate PPE (see Appendix A).
- Sketch site and floor plan of fire building.
- Sketch the fire scene.
- Identify location of furniture and other contents.
- Identify area/points of origin.
- Identify burn patterns, fire travel paths, smoke patterns and travel.
- Identify fire detection or suppression systems and devices.
- Identify location of evidence.
- Document scene according to AHJ policy.

TIME: 30 minutes

- 11. Photographically document the scene so that the scene is accurately depicted, and the photographs support scene findings.**

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.3.2
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapter 16.2

CONDITION: Given a scenario, high resolution camera, flash, accessories, and tools (see Appendix A for list of equipment).

COMPETENCE:

- Wear appropriate PPE (see Appendix A).
- Establish a photo log so that all shots taken can be identified and accounted for.
- Identify the photo file: incident number, address of incident, date, alarm time, photographer.
- Begin on the outside of the fire building, establish the location of the scene, landmarks, and building as it sits in relationship to the street.
- Photograph any evidence found on outside of structure.
- Photograph areas from the least burned to the most burned.
- Photograph burn patterns on outside of structure.
- Photograph interior rooms in proximity to the fire room that was impacted by the fire.
- Ongoing: photograph area/points of origin before, during, and at conclusion of investigative process.

TIME: 30 minutes

- 12. Construct investigative notes so that the notes are accurate, provide further documentation of the scene, and represent complete documentation of the scene findings.**

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.3.3
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapters 16.3, 16.4

CONDITION: Given a scenario, available documents (i.e., pre-fire plans, inspection reports and interview information), investigative tools, equipment (see Appendix B for list of equipment)

COMPETENCE:

- Select correct form or use appropriate document for investigative notes.
- Identify date, time, investigator, and location.
- Record facts and actual observations related to the fire scene.
- Be complete, avoid inclusion of personal comments or opinions.
- Use a systematic and consistent method when writing field notes.
- Establish a case file for incident.

TIME: 30 minutes

EVIDENCE COLLECTION/PRESERVATION

- 13. Utilize proper procedures for managing victims and fatalities so that all evidence is discovered and preserved, and protocol procedures are followed.**

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.4.1
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapter 24.6

CONDITION: Given scenario, PPE, protocol, and appropriate personnel.

COMPETENCE:

- Wear appropriate PPE (see Appendix A).
- Secure the scene.
 - a. log entry/exit
- Identify victim(s) and/or fatalities.
- Leave fire victim in place.
- Notify appropriate agencies (i.e., law enforcement, county attorney, medical examiner, and the State Fire Marshal's Office).
- Establish lead investigator/case manager.
- Conduct investigation utilizing unified command structure.

TIME: 10 minutes

14. Locate, collect, and package evidence so that evidence is identified, preserved, collected, and packaged to avoid contamination and investigator-inflicted damage. Establish a chain of custody.

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.4.2
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapter 17

CONDITION: Given a scenario, PPE, standard or investigative tools, and equipment and evidence collection materials.

COMPETENCE:

- Wear appropriate PPE (see Appendix A).
- Identify evidence to be collected.
- Document specific location of the item at the scene.
- Ensure that the photograph shows the evidence as it was found and its relationship to other items.
- Document a description of the evidence and any unique markings or labeling.
- Document date, time, and location the evidence was collected.
- Determine whether evidence is critical
- Identify the investigator who located the evidence and removed it from the scene.
- Demonstrate proper evidence collection method to avoid cross contamination.

TIME: 20 minutes

15. Select comparison sample evidence for analysis so that items for analysis support specific investigative needs.

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.4.3
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapters 16, 17

CONDITION: Given information from the investigative file, PPE.

COMPETENCE:

- Wear appropriate PPE (see Appendix A).
- Identify comparison sample to be collected
- Document specific location of the comparison sample at the scene.
- Ensure that the photograph shows the comparison sample as it was found and its relationship to other items.
- Document a description of the comparison sample and any unique markings or labeling
- Document date, time, and location the comparison sample was collected.
- Determine the need for forensic, engineering, or laboratory needs
- Identify the investigator who located the comparison sample and removed it from the scene.
- Demonstrate proper comparison sample collection method to avoid cross contamination.

TIME: 20 minutes

16. Maintain a chain of custody so that written documentation exists for each piece of evidence and evidence is secured.

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.4.4
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapters 17.5, 17.6, 17.7, 17.9

CONDITION: Given standard investigative tools, marking tools, and evidence sample, tags/logs, PPE.

COMPETENCE:

- Identify evidence on log sheet.
- Document and maintain security of evidence.
- Document each time evidence changes custody.
- Maintain evidence log as part of incident-related documentation.

TIME: 10 minutes

17. Dispose of evidence so that the disposal is timely, safely conducted, and in compliance with jurisdictional or agency requirements.

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.4.5
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapters 17.12

CONDITION: Given jurisdictional regulations and file information.

COMPETENCE:

- Receive proper authorization and documentation to dispose of evidence.
- Return evidence to rightful owner as applicable.
- Dispose of evidence as directed by agency requirements that are not harmful to the investigator or the environment.
- Document the disposal of the evidence.

TIME: 10 minutes

INTERVIEW

18. Develop an interview plan so that the plan reflects a strategy to further determine the fire cause and affix responsibility and includes a relevant questioning strategy for each individual to be interviewed that promotes the efficient use of the investigator's time.

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.5.1
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapters 14.1, 14.4

CONDITION: Given a scenario and person(s) for interviewing.

COMPETENCE:

- Plan the interview (questions and timeframe).
- Separate the parties to be interviewed so they are in different locations.
- Identify type of interview (custodial/noncustodial).
- Gather pertinent and accurate information.
- Obtain information that corroborates or refutes the investigative data.
- Obtain information that assists in the determination of the fire origin, cause, and affixing responsibility.
- Identify who is to be interviewed as part of the investigation.
- Develop focused questions for individuals
- Use existing file data to help develop questions and fill investigative gaps
- Determine appropriate location/setting to conduct interviews.

- TIME: 30 minutes
19. **Conduct interviews so that pertinent information is obtained, follow-up questions are asked, responses to all questions are elicited, and the response to each question is documented accurately.**
- REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.5.2
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapters 14.1, 14.4
- CONDITION: Given a scenario and incident information.
- COMPETENCE:
- Introduce yourself as the investigator.
 - Positively identify the person being interviewed and document them by name, SSN, DOB, government-issued identification, address, home and work phone number, and a physical description.
 - Document time, date, and location of interview.
 - Outline purpose of the interview.
 - Ensure appropriate legal requirements are met
 - During interview, investigator should remain calm, professional, positive, and focused.
 - Ask “open-ended” questions.
 - Adjust interviewing strategies based on information obtained throughout the interview
 - Document all responses to questions, note any discrepancies, note nonverbal indicators, and general impressions of the interviewee.
 - Close the interview and allow the interviewee a chance to provide any additional information.
- TIME: 30 minutes
20. **Evaluate interview information so that all interview data is individually analyzed and correlated with all other interviews, corroborative and conflictive information is documented, and new leads are discovered.**
- REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.5.3
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapter 12
- CONDITION: Given a scenario, interview transcripts or notes and incident data.
- COMPETENCE:
- Organize and analyze all information collected.
 - Identify inconsistencies in the investigative data.
 - Based on interview, identify any other persons to be interviewed (i.e., first responders or other witnesses).
 - Based on interview, analyze information provided by various individuals interviewed and judge the reliability of information.
 - Document analysis of information.
- TIME: 30 minutes

POST-INCIDENT INVESTIGATION

- 21. Gather reports and records so that all gathered documents are applicable to the investigation, complete, and authentic; the chain of custody is maintained; and the material is admissible in a legal proceeding.**

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.6.1
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapters 12, 16, 17.9

CONDITION: Given a scenario and appropriate documents.

COMPETENCE:

- Gather all applicable reports, photos, videos, and interviews.
- Ensure and document chain of custody.
- Organize investigation file for reference.

TIME: 20 minutes

- 22. Evaluate the investigative file so that areas for further investigation are identified, the relationship between gathered documents and information is interpreted, and corroborative evidence and information discrepancies are discovered.**

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.6.2
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapters 12, 17.10, 20, 28

CONDITION: Given a scenario, all available fire information.

COMPETENCE:

- Determine status of case (i.e., active/inactive).
- Identify areas needing further investigation.
- Coordinate with other agencies to determine possible links or similarities.

TIME: 20 minutes

- 23. Coordinate expert resources so that the expert's competencies are matched to the specific investigation needs, financial expenditures are justified, and utilization clearly furthers the investigation toward the goals of causation determination or affixing responsibility.**

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.6.3
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapters 15.5, 15.6, 28.3, 28.4

CONDITION: Given a scenario, investigative file, reports, and documents.

COMPETENCE:

- Identify the need for and type of an expert witness.
- Identify potential expert witnesses for investigation.
- Determine experts' qualifications.
- Interview expert to determine ability to support investigation.
- Determine budget to support use of expert witness.

TIME: 20 minutes

24. Establish evidence as to motive and/or opportunity so that the evidence is supported by documentation and meets the evidentiary requirements of the jurisdiction.

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.6.4
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapters 15, 16, 17, 23

CONDITION: Given a scenario.

COMPETENCE:

- Identify motives for setting incendiary fires.
- Evaluate corresponding documents for suspect motives and/or opportunities. To include financial analysis and records gathering
- Determine line of questioning based on analysis finding. (Provide at least 3 questions)

TIME: 30 minutes

25. Formulate an opinion of the person(s) and/or product(s) responsible for the fire so that the opinion regarding responsibility for a fire is supported by the records, reports, documents, and evidence.

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.6.5
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapter 20

CONDITION: Given a scenario and all investigative findings.

COMPETENCE:

- Review data and test hypothesis against data.
- Formulate and document conclusion of case.

TIME: 10 minutes

PRESENTATIONS

26. Express investigative findings verbally so that the information is accurate, the presentation is completed within the allotted time, and the presentation includes only “need to know” information for the intended audience(s).

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.7.2
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapter 12.4, 12.5

CONDITION: Given a scenario, investigative findings, notes, a time allotment, and a specific audience.

COMPETENCE:

- Verbally communicate report to intended audience.
- Focus on facts and relevant information.

TIME: 15 minutes

27. Testify during legal proceedings so that all pertinent investigative information and evidence is presented clearly and accurately, and your (the investigator's) demeanor and attire are appropriate to the proceedings.

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.7.3
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapter 12

CONDITION: Given a scenario, investigative findings, contents of reports, and consultation with legal counsel.

COMPETENCE:

- Identify different types of legal proceedings.
- Review case file prior to testimony.
- Arrive on time to proceeding.
- Dress appropriately.
- Communicate in professional, concise, and accurate manner. Avoid technical verbiage/jargon and filler words. Speak plainly.
- Respond to questions with pertinent information as it relates to the case. Making sure to express facts and not opinion.

TIME: 10 minutes

28. Prepare a written investigation report so that the report accurately reflects the investigative findings, is concise, expresses your (the investigator's) opinion, and meets the needs or requirements of the intended audience(s).

REFERENCE: NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition, 4.7.1
NFPA 921, 2021, Chapter 15

CONDITION: Given the evolution (accidental, incendiary, or fatal) investigative findings, documentation, and a specific audience.

COMPETENCE: Prepare a written report that:

- Is concise, legible, and contains correct grammar and spelling
- Reflects the investigative process
- Reflects the scientific method
- Reflects the investigator findings
 - Area of fire origin
 - Point of fire origin
 - Ignition source
 - First fuel ignited
 - Ignition sequence
 - Fire cause
- Is written for the intended audience

TIME: 45 minutes

Evolution Examinations

To create a more realistic testing environment, the individual skills have been assembled into these evolution examinations. Candidates must train and complete an in-house exam on all examination evolutions. During testing, candidates will be tested on a random draw of one evolution examination and one skill. The evolutions and skills will be graded on a 100% pass/fail basis.

EVOLUTION 1: ACCIDENTAL

CONDITION: Given a prop, wearing PPE, complete an initial fire investigation (verbalize/demonstrate).

SCENARIO: As a fire investigator, you are called to a structure fire at the current date, time, and weather conditions. You arrive on scene and make initial contact with command. First-arriving crews reported a room and contents fire. The fire was reported by a passerby. The owner of the residence is absent at the time of the fire.

COMPETENCE:

1. Wear appropriate PPE
2. Demonstrate securing a fire scene:
 - a. Determine initial scope and purpose of investigation.
 - b. Determine the size of the perimeter that is to be established.
3. Conduct an exterior survey:
 - a. Assess fire ground for safety hazards.
 - b. Assess structural conditions of building.
 - c. Observe and identify exterior damage and effects of the fire.
 - d. Identify and mark any evidence or potential evidence found on the exterior of the fire scene.
4. Conduct an interior Survey:
 - a. Observe and identify interior damage and effects of the fire.
 - b. Identify areas that require additional investigation.
5. Interpret burn patterns:
 - a. Identify the material involved in the fire.
 - b. Identify and interpret fire/burn patterns
6. Correlate burn patterns:
 - a. Identify fire patterns to determine area of origin.
 - b. Identify and summarize area of fire origin and fire development scenario.
7. Photographically document the scene:
 - a. Establish a photo log so that all shots taken can be identified and accounted for.
 - b. Identify the photo file: incident number, address of incident, date, alarm time, photographer
 - c. Beginning on the outside of the fire building, establish the location of the scene, landmarks, and building as it sits in relationship to the street.
 - d. Photograph any evidence found on outside of structure.
 - e. Photograph areas from the least burned to the most burned.
 - f. Photograph burn patterns on outside of structure.

- g. Photograph interior rooms in proximity to the fire room that was impacted by the fire.
- 8. Locate, collect, and package evidence:
 - a. Identify evidence to be collected.
 - b. Document specific location of the item at the scene.
 - c. Ensure that the photograph shows the evidence as it was found and its relationship to other items.
 - d. Document a description of the evidence and any unique markings or labeling.
 - e. Document date, time and location the evidence was collected.
 - f. Identify the investigator who located the evidence and removed it from the scene.
 - g. Demonstrate proper evidence collection method to avoid cross contamination.

TIME: 45 minutes

EVOLUTION 2: INCENDIARY

CONDITION: Given a prop and wearing PPE, complete an initial fire investigation using current date, time, and weather. Complete an initial fire investigation (Verbalize/demonstrate).

SCENARIO: As a fire investigator, you are called to a structure fire in a vacant house, reported by a passerby who did not remain on scene. Fire crews reported to on-scene commander that the fire was hard to extinguish.

COMPETENCE:

- 1. Wear appropriate PPE
- 2. Demonstrate securing a fire scene:
 - a. Determine initial scope and purpose of investigation.
 - b. Determine the size of the perimeter that is to be established.
 - c. Determine entry/exit point.
- 3. Conduct an interior Survey:
 - a. Assess fire ground for safety hazards.
 - b. Assess structural conditions of building.
 - c. Observe and identify exterior damage and effects of the fire.
 - d. Identify and mark any evidence or potential evidence found on the exterior of the fire scene.
 - e. Control access into perimeter with police or firefighter if possible
- 4. Interpret burn patterns:
 - a. Identify the material involved in the fire.
 - b. Identify and interpret fire/burn patterns.
- 5. Locate, collect, and package evidence:
 - a. Identify evidence to be collected.
 - b. Document specific location of the item at the scene.
 - c. Ensure that photographs shows the evidence as it was found and its relationship to other items.
 - d. Document a description of the evidence and any unique markings or labeling.
 - e. Document date, time, and location the evidence was collected.
 - f. Identify the investigator who located the evidence and removed it from

- the scene.
- g. Demonstrate proper evidence collection method to avoid cross contamination.
- 6. Select appropriate evidence for analysis:
 - a. Document a description of the comparison sample and any unique markings or labeling.
 - b. Document date, time, and location the comparison sample was collected.
 - c. Identify the investigator who located the comparison sample and removed it from the scene.
 - d. Demonstrate proper comparison sample collection method to avoid cross contamination.
- 7. Maintain the chain of custody:
 - a. Document and maintain security of evidence.
 - b. Maintain evidence log as part of incident-related documentation.

TIME: 45 minutes

EVOLUTION 3: FATALITY

CONDITION: Given a prop, a Rescue Randy, and wearing PPE, complete an initial fire investigation using current date, time, and weather. Complete an initial fire investigation (Verbalize/demonstrate).

SCENARIO: As a fire investigator, you are called to a structure fire in a vacant house, reported by a passerby who did not remain on scene. Fire crews reported to the on-scene commander that on a secondary search, a body was located at the fire scene.

COMPETENCE:

1. Wear appropriate PPE.
2. Demonstrate securing a fire scene:
 - a. Determine initial scope and purpose of investigation.
 - b. Determine the size of the perimeter that is to be established.
 - c. Determine entry/exit point.
3. Conduct an exterior survey:
 - a. Assess fire ground for safety hazards.
 - b. Assess structural conditions of building.
 - c. Observe and identify exterior damage and effects of the fire.
 - d. Control access into perimeter with police or firefighter if possible
4. Conduct an interior survey:
 - a. Observe and identify interior damage and effects of the fire.
 - b. Identify areas that require additional investigation.
 - c. Control access into perimeter with police or firefighter if possible.
5. Interpret burn patterns:
 - a. Identify the material involved in the fire.
 - b. Identify and interpret fire/burn patterns.
6. Correlate burn patterns:
 - a. Contrast and compare burn patterns to determine their relevance to fire spread. (Eliminate patterns caused by suppression activities.)
 - b. Identify fire patterns to determine area of origin.
 - c. Identify and summarize area of fire origin and fire development scenario.

7. Diagram the scene:
 - a. Sketch the fire scene.
 - b. Identify location of furniture and other contents.
 - c. Identify area/points of origin.
 - d. Identify location of evidence.
8. Utilize proper procedures for managing victims and fatalities:
 - a. Identify victim(s) and/or fatalities.
 - b. Leave fire victim in place.
 - c. Notify appropriate agencies (i.e., law enforcement, county attorney, medical examiner, and the State Fire Marshal's Office).

TIME: 45 minutes

UTAH FIRE SERVICE CERTIFICATION SYSTEM

FIRE INVESTIGATOR

NFPA 1033, 2022 Edition

FIRE INVESTIGATOR TRAINING RECORD / IN-HOUSE COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

Candidate Name:					Department:	
Candidate Signature:					Date of Completion:	
Chief/Training Officer Name:					Chief/Training Officer Signature:	
This form may be completed on a computer but must be printed out for the Certification Tester to verify on test day. The date of completion must be filled in and the signatures of the Chief/Training Officer and the candidate must be original signatures. The signatures attest that all skills have been trained on and a complete in-house comprehensive exam was administered and passed. Falsification of signatures or any component of this document may result in the revocation, suspension, or denial of certification.						
SECTION	TRAINING RECORD		IN-HOUSE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS			SKILL
	Date	Instructor	Date	Instructor	Pass	
SCENE EXAMINATION						1. Demonstrate securing a fire ground/scene.
						2. Conduct an exterior survey.
						3. Conduct an interior survey.
						4. Interpret burn patterns.
						5. Correlate burn patterns.
						6. Examine and remove fire debris.
						7. Reconstruct the area of origin.
						8. Inspect the performance of building systems.
						9. Discriminate the effects of explosions from other types of damage.
DOCUMENT THE SCENE						10. Diagram the scene.
						11. Photographically document the scene.
						12. Construct investigative notes.
EVIDENCE COLLECTION						13. Utilize proper procedures for managing victims and fatalities.
						14. Locate, collect, and package evidence.
						15. Select appropriate evidence for analysis.

						16. Maintain a chain of custody.
						17. Dispose of evidence.
INTERVIEW						18. Develop an interview plan.
						19. Conduct interview or interrogations.
						20. Evaluate interview information.
POST - INCIDENT INVESTIGATION						21. Gather reports and records.
						22. Evaluate the investigative file.
						23. Coordinate expert resources.
						24. Establish evidence as to motive and/or opportunity.
PRESENTATIONS						25. Formulate an opinion of the person(s) and or product(s) responsible for the fire.
						26. Express investigative findings verbally.
						27. Testify during legal proceedings.
						28. Prepare a written investigation report based on the evolution.
EVOLUTION 1						ACCIDENTAL
EVOLUTION 2						INCENDIARY
EVOLUTION 3						FATALITY

**APPENDIX A -
INVESTIGATION TOOL LIST**

SUGGESTED TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT LIST FOR FIRE INVESTIGATORS

The following is a list of equipment that may be used by a person conducting a fire investigation.

Minimum Equipment:

1. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) may vary due to the condition under which an investigator may be assessing a scene. At a very minimum, the investigator should use:
 - ☐ Safety shoes or boots
 - ☐ Gloves
 - ☐ Head protection
 - ☐ Protective clothing such as coveralls or structural PPE.
 - ☐ Filtered mask or Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA).
 - ☐ Eye protection
2. Camera
3. Barrier tape, marking cones or other marking devices
4. Evidence containers: paint cans, paper sacks, etc.
5. Flashlight or additional lighting, cord reels, and a generator (as needed)
6. Shovel (round or square mouth)
7. Broom and various sizes of brushes
8. Hand tools with carrying case:

☐ Claw hammer	☐ Wood chisel
☐ Hatchet	☐ Cold chisel
☐ Pry bar	☐ Tape measure
☐ Hacksaw with extra blades	☐ 6" rules
☐ Keyhole saw with extra blades	☐ Pencil magnet
☐ Screwdrivers of various sizes and types	☐ Tire depth-gauge tool
☐ Pliers with cutters	☐ Pencil scribe
☐ Utility knife with extra blades	☐ Marking pens
☐ Mason trowel	☐ Multi-meter (Volt-Ohm)
9. Other tools or equipment as needed for a specific fire scene such as: ladders, rope, etc.

**APPENDIX B -
IN-HOUSE PROCTOR INSTRUCTIONS**

Proctor Instructions for In-House Comprehensive Examination

As the training officers for your department, you are authorized by the Certification Council to conduct an in-house skills examination (100%) for this level of certification. You must be certified to the level that you are testing. For example, if you're FF II you can test both FF I and II, Awareness and Operations. The in-house skills examination must be completed and signed off prior to the actual certification spot check exam (administered by a UFRA certification tester).

- **Prior to conducting the test, review each candidate's training record.**

It is important that before doing this in-house training skills test, the candidate has completed training in all areas for the level being tested.

- **Select and brief a safety officer.**

Select a safety officer to assist you during the test. This person is there to protect the candidates from injury during the testing process, is not taking the test, and is not assisting with the testing process. The safety officer must be qualified at the level being tested.

To better evaluate the skills being tested and determine the candidate's readiness for the State Spot Check exam, follow these in-house exam instructions:

1. This is a TEST and there should be NO COACHING or TRAINING during the testing process. If a candidate fails to perform a skill, that skill will count as a first attempt failure and they will be given a second attempt. If they fail a second attempt, they need to be retrained on that skill and tested again. Only **qualified** candidates that have passed with **100%** should be allowed to take the State Spot Check exam.
2. Before beginning the testing process, conduct a meeting with all candidates and review the testing process. Explain that this is a test and that the same process being used for the in-house exam will be used during the state exam.
3. Designate two separate areas for students testing: One area for those who are in the testing process and one area for those who have not yet begun the testing process. If separate areas are not available, make sure someone is in the room to ensure that students do not discuss the testing material. Make sure these areas have no training manuals or other reference materials for students to look at while awaiting testing.
4. To evaluate a candidate's performance, use the following as a guide:
 - a. The skill is completed in the allotted time.
 - b. Competence is shown by completing all performance criteria.
 - c. Safety is a priority while completing the skill.
5. At each test station, the tester will read the skill to be demonstrated, the condition to be met, and the time limit to complete each skill. This information is contained in the skill section of each standards packet. Do this with each student as they come to each testing station. Ask for any questions. As each skill is tested and completed, sign it off in the section provided on the candidate's training record.

By conducting the in-house skills examination in this manner, you will prepare your candidates to successfully pass the State Spot Check exam. This will also ensure that training records are current and that only those who are truly prepared take the Certification Examination.

APPENDIX - C

CERTIFICATION FORMS & FEES

Certification forms and fees are located on our website at UVU.edu/UFRA under Certification
https://www.uvu.edu/ufra/certification/certification_forms.html