

**NFPA<sup>®</sup>**

# 1720

---

**Standard for the  
Organization and Deployment  
of Fire Suppression Operations,  
Emergency Medical Operations,  
and Special Operations to  
the Public by Volunteer Fire  
Departments**

---

**2020**



This is a preview. [Click here to purchase the full publication.](#)

## IMPORTANT NOTICES AND DISCLAIMERS CONCERNING NFPA® STANDARDS





NFPA® codes, standards, recommended practices, and guides (“NFPA Standards”), of which the document contained herein is one, are developed through a consensus standards development process approved by the American National Standards Institute. This process brings together volunteers representing varied viewpoints and interests to achieve consensus on fire and other safety issues. While the NFPA administers the process and establishes rules to promote fairness in the development of consensus, it does not independently test, evaluate, or verify the accuracy of any information or the soundness of any judgments contained in NFPA Standards.

The NFPA disclaims liability for any personal injury, property, or other damages of any nature whatsoever, whether special, indirect, consequential or compensatory, directly or indirectly resulting from the publication, use of, or reliance on NFPA Standards. The NFPA also makes no guaranty or warranty as to the accuracy or completeness of any information published herein.

In issuing and making NFPA Standards available, the NFPA is not undertaking to render professional or other services for or on behalf of any person or entity. Nor is the NFPA undertaking to perform any duty owed by any person or entity to someone else. Anyone using this document should rely on his or her own independent judgment or, as appropriate, seek the advice of a competent professional in determining the exercise of reasonable care in any given circumstances.

The NFPA has no power, nor does it undertake, to police or enforce compliance with the contents of NFPA Standards. Nor does the NFPA list, certify, test, or inspect products, designs, or installations for compliance with this document. Any certification or other statement of compliance with the requirements of this document shall not be attributable to the NFPA and is solely the responsibility of the certifier or maker of the statement.

### REVISION SYMBOLS IDENTIFYING CHANGES FROM THE PREVIOUS EDITION

Text revisions are shaded. A  before a section number indicates that words within that section were deleted and a  to the left of a table or figure number indicates a revision to an existing table or figure. When a chapter was heavily revised, the entire chapter is marked throughout with the  symbol. Where one or more sections were deleted, a • is placed between the remaining sections. Chapters, annexes, sections, figures, and tables that are new are indicated with an .

Note that these indicators are a guide. Rearrangement of sections may not be captured in the markup, but users can view complete revision details in the First and Second Draft Reports located in the archived revision information section of each code at [www.nfpa.org/docinfo](http://www.nfpa.org/docinfo). Any subsequent changes from the NFPA Technical Meeting, Tentative Interim Amendments, and Errata are also located there.

### REMINDER: UPDATING OF NFPA STANDARDS

Users of NFPA codes, standards, recommended practices, and guides (“NFPA Standards”) should be aware that these documents may be superseded at any time by the issuance of a new edition, may be amended with the issuance of Tentative Interim Amendments (TIAs), or be corrected by Errata. It is intended that through regular revisions and amendments, participants in the NFPA standards development process consider the then-current and available information on incidents, materials, technologies, innovations, and methods as these develop over time and that NFPA Standards reflect this consideration. Therefore, any previous edition of this document no longer represents the current NFPA Standard on the subject matter addressed. NFPA encourages the use of the most current edition of any NFPA Standard [as it may be amended by TIA(s) or Errata] to take advantage of current experience and understanding. An official NFPA Standard at any point in time consists of the current edition of the document, including any issued TIAs and Errata then in effect.

To determine whether an NFPA Standard has been amended through the issuance of TIAs or corrected by Errata, visit the “Codes & Standards” section at [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org).

## **ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT NOTICES AND DISCLAIMERS CONCERNING NFPA® STANDARDS**

### **Updating of NFPA Standards**

Users of NFPA codes, standards, recommended practices, and guides (“NFPA Standards”) should be aware that these documents may be superseded at any time by the issuance of a new edition, may be amended with the issuance of Tentative Interim Amendments (TIAs), or be corrected by Errata. It is intended that through regular revisions and amendments, participants in the NFPA standards development process consider the then-current and available information on incidents, materials, technologies, innovations, and methods as these develop over time and that NFPA Standards reflect this consideration. Therefore, any previous edition of this document no longer represents the current NFPA Standard on the subject matter addressed. NFPA encourages the use of the most current edition of any NFPA Standard [as it may be amended by TIA(s) or Errata] to take advantage of current experience and understanding. An official NFPA Standard at any point in time consists of the current edition of the document, including any issued TIAs and Errata then in effect.

To determine whether an NFPA Standard has been amended through the issuance of TIAs or corrected by Errata, visit the “Codes & Standards” section at [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org).

### **Interpretations of NFPA Standards**

A statement, written or oral, that is not processed in accordance with Section 6 of the Regulations Governing the Development of NFPA Standards shall not be considered the official position of NFPA or any of its Committees and shall not be considered to be, nor be relied upon as, a Formal Interpretation.

### **Patents**

The NFPA does not take any position with respect to the validity of any patent rights referenced in, related to, or asserted in connection with an NFPA Standard. The users of NFPA Standards bear the sole responsibility for determining the validity of any such patent rights, as well as the risk of infringement of such rights, and the NFPA disclaims liability for the infringement of any patent resulting from the use of or reliance on NFPA Standards.

NFPA adheres to the policy of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) regarding the inclusion of patents in American National Standards (“the ANSI Patent Policy”), and hereby gives the following notice pursuant to that policy:

NOTICE: The user’s attention is called to the possibility that compliance with an NFPA Standard may require use of an invention covered by patent rights. NFPA takes no position as to the validity of any such patent rights or as to whether such patent rights constitute or include essential patent claims under the ANSI Patent Policy. If, in connection with the ANSI Patent Policy, a patent holder has filed a statement of willingness to grant licenses under these rights on reasonable and nondiscriminatory terms and conditions to applicants desiring to obtain such a license, copies of such filed statements can be obtained, on request, from NFPA. For further information, contact the NFPA at the address listed below.

### **Law and Regulations**

Users of NFPA Standards should consult applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. NFPA does not, by the publication of its codes, standards, recommended practices, and guides, intend to urge action that is not in compliance with applicable laws, and these documents may not be construed as doing so.

### **Copyrights**

NFPA Standards are copyrighted. They are made available for a wide variety of both public and private uses. These include both use, by reference, in laws and regulations, and use in private self-regulation, standardization, and the promotion of safe practices and methods. By making these documents available for use and adoption by public authorities and private users, the NFPA does not waive any rights in copyright to these documents.

Use of NFPA Standards for regulatory purposes should be accomplished through adoption by reference. The term “adoption by reference” means the citing of title, edition, and publishing information only. Any deletions, additions, and changes desired by the adopting authority should be noted separately in the adopting instrument. In order to assist NFPA in following the uses made of its documents, adopting authorities are requested to notify the NFPA (Attention: Secretary, Standards Council) in writing of such use. For technical assistance and questions concerning adoption of NFPA Standards, contact NFPA at the address below.

### **For Further Information**

All questions or other communications relating to NFPA Standards and all requests for information on NFPA procedures governing its codes and standards development process, including information on the procedures for requesting Formal Interpretations, for proposing Tentative Interim Amendments, and for proposing revisions to NFPA standards during regular revision cycles, should be sent to NFPA headquarters, addressed to the attention of the Secretary, Standards Council, NFPA, 1 Batterymarch Park, P.O. Box 9101, Quincy, MA 02269-9101; email: [stds\\_admin@nfpa.org](mailto:stds_admin@nfpa.org).

For more information about NFPA, visit the NFPA website at [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org). All NFPA codes and standards can be viewed at no cost at [www.nfpa.org/docinfo](http://www.nfpa.org/docinfo).

Copyright © 2019 National Fire Protection Association®. All Rights Reserved.

## NFPA® 1720

### Standard for the

# Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments

## 2020 Edition

This edition of NFPA 1720, *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments*, was prepared by the Technical Committee on Fire and Emergency Service Organization and Deployment—Volunteer. It was issued by the Standards Council on April 28, 2019, with an effective date of May 18, 2019, and supersedes all previous editions.

This edition of NFPA 1720 was approved as an American National Standard on May 18, 2019.

### Origin and Development of NFPA 1720

In 2001, the first edition of NFPA 1720 was issued. The development of that benchmark standard was the result of a considerable amount of hard work and tenacity by the Technical Committee members and the organizations they represented. That standard was the first organized approach to defining levels of service, deployment capabilities, and staffing levels for substantially volunteer fire departments. Research work and empirical studies in North America were used by the Committee as a basis for developing response times and resource capabilities for those services, as identified by the fire department.

Following the issuance of the first edition, the NFPA Standards Council asked the Technical Committee to begin the revision process for a 2004 edition of the standard. The Committee reviewed and revised the first edition of NFPA 1720. Existing definitions were cleaned up and new definitions added where needed to assist users of the standard. A new section on community risk management was added as was an annex titled “Risk Management Model.” New sections were also added on “reporting requirements” and “initial attack.” Annex material that included extracted figures from NFPA 1221, *Standard for the Installation, Maintenance, and Use of Emergency Services Communications Systems*, was added to assist users in determining if calls for service were being properly handled.

The 2010 edition of NFPA 1720 standardized and refined terminology and definitions used in the document. Table 4.3.2 was editorially revised to make it more understandable and the requirement that the fire department have the capability to initiate an attack within 2 minutes of having necessary resources at the scene in remote areas was moved from the footnotes to a new paragraph and made applicable to all operations. Introductory material for Table 4.3.2 was modified to indicate the requirements apply to a structure fire in a typical 2000 ft<sup>2</sup> (186 m<sup>2</sup>), two-story single family dwelling without basement and with no exposures. Text was added in the annex to assist users in calculating the percentage of times they meet the objective.

A new section on sustained firefighting operations was added, and several sections were revised and reorganized to present the requirements in a more logical order.

The annex material that discusses the requirements in NFPA 1221 was expanded and the two figures extracted from NFPA 1221 updated. Annex B was extensively revised to make it more concise by removing ambiguous text and figures. Annex C was deleted in its entirety.

The work done by the committee provided the user with a template for developing an implementation plan on the standard. Most important, it provided the body politic and the citizens a true picture of the risks in their community and the fire department’s capabilities to respond to and manage those risks.