



CHICAGO FIRE DEPARTMENT
CITY OF CHICAGO

June 10, 2013

Joseph M. Ferguson
Inspector General
Office of the Inspector General
740 N. Sedgwick Street, Suite 200
Chicago, Illinois 60654-2996

Dear Inspector General Ferguson:

On behalf of the Fire Prevention Bureau of the Chicago Fire Department (CFD), I would like to express our gratitude to the Inspector General's Office (IGO) for its work in the preparation of this advisory. The CFD Fire Prevention Bureau has reviewed the IGO's report in order to determine information that can improve operations and enhance the safety of the people who live, work and visit the city of Chicago. While CFD appreciates the time and effort that went into presenting this report, there are also some inaccuracies that require additional clarification.

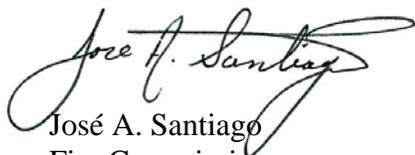
First, there is not another municipality in Illinois that possesses the "high-rise building" landscape that Chicago does. This characteristic has its own set of robust challenges when administering firefighting and emergency medical services (EMS) services. And while the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) may deem the practice of sending a CFD representative to view pump tests as "*unusual*", we believe this fits our core mission of protecting life and saving property. In addition, CFD oversees pump system tests because experience shows that some third party companies may submit erroneous reports if they are not monitored. The proper functioning of the fire pump and its related systems are paramount to effective fire suppression and rescue efforts, and any violations are documented and follow-up inspections or court dates are established to bring these systems back into compliance.

Second, the IGO mentions in the report that the FPB's "*inspection manual does not provide instruction for an inspector observing a pump test*". What is not stated is that the 18 FPB inspectors, who perform pump tests, individually possess several years of experience in administering and overseeing pump tests. They also must be specifically well-versed with National Fire Protection Association Codes 10, 13, 20 and 25 and this is only achieved by continuing, hands-on training that occurs several times throughout the year for all inspectors. Accordingly, delineated observation instructions are not required.

Going forward, the CFD will request proof of OSFM certification from pump test companies annually. In addition, the CFD will require proof of certification, again, during the scheduling phase for all pump tests. If any certification inconsistencies are discovered, notification to the OSFM will be made immediately. It is important to note that there is a long standing relationship between the CFD and the OSFM that yields a continuous exchange of information. This will not change. It is the CFD's goal to maintain this relationship and to ensure that every high-rise building has pumps and protection systems that are in working order, and that their operating procedures adhere to the Municipal Code of Chicago.

Going forth, I would recommend that IGO work directly with the Deputy Fire Commissioner of the FPB on issues such as those discussed above, in order to obtain the most accurate information regarding the FPB and its policies and procedures, as it is the Deputy Fire Commissioner who bears official responsibility of the actions and procedures of the FPB in its role of ensuring the safety of the people who live, work and visit the city of Chicago. Again, thank you for your time and attention to this issue. If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "José A. Santiago". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

José A. Santiago
Fire Commissioner
CHICAGO FIRE DEPARTMENT