
School Wall Decorations (Uses of Paper Materials)

527 CMR 1.00, s. 20.2.4.4.3
OSFM Advisory 10/21/2003, 11/1/2006
DFS has an entire webpage devoted to
this topic: www.mass.gov/dfs click on *Fire
Prevention then School Wall Regulations*.

Regulates how, where and how much pa-
per decorations may safely be displayed
on walls in sprinklered and unsprinklered
buildings.

When building new schools, consider
this regulation and include bulletin board
design to safely display paper materials.

Fire Lanes

527 CMR 1.00. c. 18

Regulations on designation, maintenance
and preventing obstruction of fire lanes.

Keep clear at all times.

Fire Extinguishers

527 CMR 1.00, s. 13.6

Emergency Wash Stations

527 CMR 1.00, s. 10.24

Says where, how many and what kind of
fire extinguishers and emergency wash
stations schools need.

Has testing and inspection requirements.

Labs are required to have emergency
wash systems (showers) or fire blankets
and signage.

Fire Protection Systems

527 CMR 1.00, c. 13

Requires schools to inspect, test and

maintain fire alarm, fire sprinkler and
kitchen suppression systems.

Chemistry Labs

527 CMR 1.00, c. 66

Permits and special storage arrange-
ments may be required based on the
type and quantity of chemicals stored.

Don't store chemicals alphabetically.

Think about the life cycle and hazardous
waste disposal when purchasing and
storing chemicals.

See 527 CMR 1.00, s. 10.24 for emergency
wash stations, fire blankets and signage.

School Fire Reporting Law

M.G.L. c. 148, s. 2A

OSFM Advisory 6/1/2006 & 8/1/2006

Requires schools to report all fires to the
local fire department.

Requires fire departments to report all
school fires to the Mass. Fire Incident
Reporting System (MFIRS).

No Smoking in Schools

Federal Law; M.G.L. c. 270, s. 22

Fire and Life Safety Education

M.G.L. c.71, s. 1

DESE Health Curriculum Frameworks

The Student Awareness of Fire Education
(S.A.F.E.) program has trained firefighter-
educators who work with classroom
teachers.

Fire Prevention in Schools



A school is one of the most important resources in a community. School fires destroy costly bricks and mortar, and also the heart of a community.

This pamphlet summarizes fire prevention regulations affecting schools. It also explains where to find more detailed information about regulations.

Fire prevention laws can be found in M.G.L. Chapter 148. Most fire prevention regulations affecting schools can be found in 527 Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR) 1.00. The Department of Fire Services' website has these and many helpful Office the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) *Advisories*. Visit www.mass.gov/dfs and look for *DFS Advisories* under *News & Events* and under *Fire Prevention*.

School Fire Drills

527 CMR 1.00, s. 20.2.4.2.1.4
OSFM Advisory 6/27/2001

Fire departments are required to conduct fire drills in schools four times a year. One of the drills must happen within three days of the start of school.

Multi-Hazard & MERP Plans

Section 363 of Chapter 159 of the Acts of 2000 M.G.L. c. 69, s. 8A

School superintendents are required to meet with the local police and fire chiefs to develop a multi-hazard evacuation plan and in addition must have developed a Medical Emergency Response Plan (MERP) by fall 2012.

DFS has a *Bomb Threat Response Guide* pamphlet to help with all hazard planning.

Place of Assembly (Theatres, Auditorium, Gym, Cafeteria)

527 CMR 1.00, s. 20.1.5.10.3.1

Schools need a certificate of inspection from the building official which will set the occupancy limit.

Severe penalties for violating occupancy limits and blocked egress, passed in the aftermath of the fire at The Station nightclub.

See *School Wall Decoration* regulations for proms, dances, etc.

See regulations on drapery and curtains.

Crowd Manager Requirements

527 CMR 1.00, s. 20.1.5.6

A crowd manager is needed in facilities that feature entertainment by live band or recorded music generating above normal sound levels and which have a specific area designated for dancing. Schools might need a trained crowd manager on-duty when holding school dances. To be sure, discuss this with your local fire department early in the school year. For more information on crowd manager requirements or to take the online training program, please go to www.mass.gov/dfs.

Upholstered Furniture, Molded Chairs and Re-Upholstered Furniture

527 CMR 1.00, s. 12.6.3

OSFM Advisory 12/20/2002

Requirements are different for sprinklered and unsprinklered buildings.

Flammability testing requirements for furniture.

Furniture should be resistant to fire. It can produce volumes of toxic smoke.

Decorations, Curtains, Draperies and Window Treatments

527 CMR 1.00, s. 12.6.2

Requires certification that these products meet flammability standards.

Theatrical Special Effects

527 CMR 1.00, c. 65

OSFM Advisory 1/5/2007 & 8/1/2014

Schools need a permit from the local fire department to use special effects and pyrotechnics (including flash powder and flash paper).

Special effects and pyrotechnics must be conducted by licensed individuals. Failure to do so constitutes a violation of M.G.L. c. 148, s. 34A with a \$5,000 fine and/or 2 1/2 years in prison. The law was passed in the aftermath of the Station nightclub fire.

General Housekeeping

Store cleaning chemicals in a safe and secure area (not next to heat sources.)

Shut off the appliances in the teacher/staff lounge each day.

Teach kitchen fire safety to cafeteria staff and include them in fire drills. Kitchen fires are one of the leading causes of fires in schools.

Do not wedge fire doors open (527 CMR 1.00, s. 12.4.6.18.3).