



*Tad S. Matheson, Fire Chief
Fire Department
3326 Tower Avenue
Superior, Wisconsin, 54880*

*(715) 394-0227
Fax (715) 394-0215
TDD (715) 394-0251*

Body Shops

In the 1920's the State of Wisconsin adopted codes that applied to the storage and application of flammable liquids. These same codes continue to be in force to this day virtually unchanged. The requirements of these codes can be found in COMM chapter 10 and NFPA 30 & 33. It is important to note that the requirements of these codes apply to all facilities involved in the storage or spray application of flammable liquids opened since the code was originally passed in the 1920's. You will find the basic requirements of these codes outlined below for your reference.

For a number of years, many of the requirements of these codes have been overlooked. In November, 2001, the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, which has the regulating responsibility for these codes, notified local fire departments would be required to bring into compliance all facilities to which these codes applied. In addition, they indicated that they would consider it acceptable for business owners to take up to one to three years to complete what ever work is necessary to bring their properties into compliance.

Flammable Liquid Storage: As a general rule, no more than 60 gallons of flammable liquids may be outside of either a flammable liquid storage room or a UL listed (or equivalent) flammable liquid storage cabinet. If a flammable liquid storage room is constructed, it must meet the requirements found in NFPA 30 4.4. Cabinets must meet the requirements of NFPA 30 4.3. Flammable liquid storage cabinets are limited in capacity to 120 gallons each and there may not be more than three in a building.

Spray Area/Room: A spray area meeting the requirements of NFPA 33 3 must be used for any spray application of any flammable liquid. This chapter of NFPA gives specifications for the construction of a spray booth or spray room. IN addition, it provides direction of the designation of a spray area., in the event that a separate booth or room is not used.

Ventilation: Spray areas/booths must be provided with ventilation systems that meet the requirements of NFPA 33 5. The ventilation system must exhaust at least 6 feet from the nearest wall or roof. It must take the most direct route to the exterior of the building and must be capable of removing vapors, mists and combustible dust and residue from the spray area.

Electrical Wiring: The wiring in a spray area or booth must meet the requirements of

NFPA 33 4.3.4. This wiring is commonly referred to as “explosion-proof” wiring. In addition any fixtures or switches within the area must also meet these requirements.

Automatic Fire Suppression System: Spray areas, mixing rooms and their associated exhaust plenums and duct work shall be provided with an automatic fire suppression system meeting the requirements of NFPA 33 7. There are a variety of extinguishing agents that are permitted. They include water, dry chemical, carbon dioxide, and “clean agents.”

Mixing Room: Any mixing, dispensing or transferring of flammable liquids must take place either in the spray area/booth, or in a mixing room. Which meets the requirements of NFPA 33 6.3. Mixing rooms must be provided with continuous ventilation, must have “explosion-proof” wiring and fixtures, have an automatic fire suppression system, and there must be a fire extinguisher of at least a 40B size in the room..

Copies of the applicable codes are available for your viewing at the headquarters fire station at 3326 Tower Avenue. Copies of the NFPA codes may be obtained from Nation Fire protection Agency, 11 Tracy Drive, Avon, MA, 02322-9908. Copies of the Wisconsin COMM codes may be obtained from the Wisconsin Department of Administration, Document Sales & Distribution Section, 202 South Thornton Avenue, P.O. Box 7840, Madison, WI 53707-7840 or may be downloaded from their website at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code/>.