POLICY

SUBJECT AREA:
300-399 Facilities
and Equipment

EFFECTIVE DATE: 11/6/78

UNITS AFFECTED:
Department of Corrections

INTRODUCTION

Attention to fire safety prevention procedures are particularly crucial in correctional facilities. In many cases we are dealing with persons who do not have free movement and are confined to a one cell area. In addition, there is a recent body of both federal and state legislation which mandates improved standards of life safety.

OBJECTIVE

To provide guidelines for administrators in implementing specific procedures and methods for fire prevention and reaction in case of fire.

GROUP SERVED

All staff at correctional facilities.

POLICY DESCRIPTION

Procedures: Each Superintendent shall develop, in coordination with the local fire department serving the facility, the Buildings Division, a Comprehensive Fire Prevention and Reaction Plan. This plan is to be reviewed annually by the Superintendent, and must contain provisions for necessary inspections and notification of proper agencies. A semi-annual review is to be made of equipment. A copy shall be sent to the Director of Adult Facilities. Any updates shall be filed with the Director. If no update is required, a statement to that effect shall be sent to the Director of Adult Facilities.

The procedures described in the plan shall include an evacuation plan, location of keys, locations of fire fighting and protection equipment, regular checking of emergency exits, fire drills, control of access to potentially flammable materials, and regular testing and inspections of fire protection equipment.

Training: Because of unique danger of fire and its consequences in correctional facilities, all staff must be completely trained with regard to plans and procedures in fire safety and proper use of fire fighting equipment. Local fire departments should be utilized to provide specific training wherever possible. All staff must be completely trained with regard to the yearly updated plans and procedures in fire safety, and proper use of fire fighting equipment. The Department Training Officer will assist the facilities in coordination of training.

Equipment: The semi-annual review shall include a complete inventory of fire prevention and fire fighting equipment. That essential equipment which is missing or needs replacement shall be purchased.

Responsibility & Reporting: A specific individual in each facility will be designated, in writing by the Superintendent, as responsible for fire safety inspections, equipment and coordination of related training safety inspections. This Fire Safety Officer shall undertake monthly monitoring and reporting to the Superintendent on matters addressed in the Comprehensive Prevention and Reaction Plan.

All incidents involving fire shall be reported to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will report to the Director of Adult Facilities any experiences in which fire equipment does not function properly or where the Superintendent believes furnishings or other materials supplied to residents constitute a fire hazard.

copy of the monthly report of the facility Fire Safety Officer will be included in the Superintendent's Monthly Progress Report to the Director of Adult Facilities.

Reporting: All incidents involving fire should be reported to the Director of Adult Facilities. Facility Superintendents will report any negative experiences they have with any equipment or supply item which constitutes as fire hazard to the Director of Adult Facilities. Furthermore, all incidents should immediately be reported to local fire departments.

In addition, all fires should be reported within a reasonable time to the Arson Squad of the Public Safety Department.

Discipline: Through the use of the Resident Guidebook, the seriousness and potential danger of fire will be addressed. Residents will be instructed verbally that the setting of fires or triggering false alarms, no matter how minor are to be treated as major disciplinary infractions and that strict disciplinary action will follow. Prosecution may result.

Coordination with Other Agencies: The Superintendent and the Fire Safety Officer will coordinate with the local fire department serving the facility. The assistance of the fire department will be requested in conducting the annual review of the Comprehensive Fire Prevention and Reaction Plan. When incidents of fire occur which are controlled by the facility staff, the action taken by the facility staff to control minor fires will be reported to the fire department within a reasonable time. Advice will be requested from the above agencies on how to avoid repetition of the problem or improve response by the Superintendent or Director of Adult Facilities.

The Superintendent and the Director of Adult Facilities will coordinate with the Buildings Division to obtain annual VOSHA inspection of each facility. In addition, each facility shall be inspected by the Fire Prevention Division of Labor and Industry Department semi-annually. The Buildings

Division maintains the Correctional Facilities for the State of Vermont. Such being the case, all procedures and plans in relation to fire safety and prevention should be coordinated and filed with that Division. This coordination shall be established and maintained by the Superintendent and the Director of Adult Facilities.

Legal Reference

28 V.S.A. Sec. 601 (2,3,5,7,9)
Sec. 851

CFR28 Judicial Administration
Chapter 1 - Department of Justice
Parts 0 - 199

Parts 3 - Federal Prisons Industries
Department of Justice
Parts 300 - 399

Cornelius Hogan

Cornelius Hogan, Commissioner