
School Wall Decorations (Uses of Paper Materials)

527 CMR 10.09 (5)

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 paper
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 10.03

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

Keep clear at all times.

Fire Extinguishers and Emergency Wash Stations

527 CMR 10.02

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 sys-
tems (showers) or fire blankets and signage.

No Smoking in Schools

Federal Law; M.G.L. c. 270, s. 22;
527 CMR 10.07

Chemistry Labs

527 CMR 14

Permits and special storage arrangements 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 10 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).

Fire Protection Systems

527 CMR 1.06, 527 CMR 11.00 (Kitchen)

Requires schools to inspect, test and maintain
fire alarm, fire sprinkler and kitchen
suppression systems.

Fire and Life Safety Education

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

DOE Health Curriculum Frameworks

The Student Awareness of Fire Education or
S.A.F.E. Program has trained firefighter-
educators to work with classroom teachers.

Fire Data and Public Education
978-567-3380 • www.mass.gov/dfs

7/14

Fire Prevention in Schools



DEPARTMENT OF FIRE SERVICES

Stephen D. Coan • State Fire Marshal

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 and also provides directions about where to find more detailed information about the 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) 10. 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 *OSFM Advisories* under *News & Events* and under *Fire Prevention*.

School Fire Drills

527 CMR 10.09
OSFM Advisory 6/27/2001

Fire Departments are required to conduct fire drills in schools four times a year including one within three days of the start of school.

Multi-Hazard & EMS 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 an EMS Plan by fall 2012.

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

527 CMR 10.17

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

New 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 10.13

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.

Decorations, Curtains, Draperies and Window Treatments

527 CMR 21.00

Requires certification that these products meet flammability standards.

Upholstered Furniture, Molded Chairs and Re-Upholstered Furniture

527 CMR 29

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.

Theatrical Special Effects

527 CMR 2.09

OSFM Advisory 8/1/2003 and 1/5/2007

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

Must be conducted by licensed individual.

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 - passed in the aftermath of the fire at The Station nightclub.

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.

527 CMR 10.03(9)

Do not wedge fire doors open.