

# [ PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1185, August 26, 1977 ]

## FIRE CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES

**WHEREAS**, death and injury to persons and loss and damages to property by fire have reached alarming proportion that the economic and social gains of the society are being continually undermined;

**WHEREAS**, in order to effect a meaningful reduction of the alarming fire losses, there is a need to develop national consciousness and involvement of all persons in the prevention and suppression of fires;

**WHEREAS**, fire prevention and suppression require the adoption of uniform fire safety standards, the incorporation of fire safety construction and provision of protective and safety devices in buildings and structures;

**WHEREAS**, there is an urgent need for an agency primarily responsible for the implementation and coordination of the activities of all sectors of society on fire safety, prevention and suppression;

**WHEREAS**, in order to effectively implement all efforts to minimize the occurrence of fires and their destructive effects, full financial, equipment and personnel support by the government and the private sector is necessary;

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS**, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution, do hereby order and decree as part of the laws of the land, the following:

SECTION 1. *Title*.—This Decree and the Rules and Regulations for its implementation shall be known as the "Fire Code of the Philippines" and shall hereinafter be referred to as the "Fire Code"

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policies*.—The following are declared policies of the State:

- a. The Government, with the cooperation of the private sector, shall develop and promulgate sets of standards and regulations taking into consideration the latest development in fire technology suitable to Philippine conditions;
- b. Fire prevention and fire safety shall be given equal, if not greater emphasis as the suppression or extinguishment of fires. Fire prevention education shall be undertaken continuously involving all sectors of the community;
- c. The Fire Service of the Integrated National Police shall endeavor to respond to all fires before they reach critical and conflagration stages. Towards this end, the organization, administration and operation of the Fire Service shall be improved and developed, its personnel and equipment augmented and effective fire alarm systems set up; and

d. The Fire Service shall be professionalized. For this purpose, educational institutions shall endeavor to include in their curricula, courses on fire technology and fire protection engineering.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.*-As used in this Fire Code, the following words and phrases shall mean and be construed as indicated:

*Abatement*-Any act that would remove or neutralize a fire hazard.

*Administrator*-Any person who acts as agent of the owner and manages the use of a building for him.

*Blasting Agent*-Any material or mixture consisting of a fuel and oxidizer used to set off explosives.

*Cellulose Nitrate or Nitro Cellulose*-A highly combustible and explosive compound produced by the reaction of nitric acid with a cellulose material.

*Cellulose Nitrate Plastic (Pyroxylin)*-Any plastic substance, materials or compound having cellulose nitrate (nitro cellulose) as base.

*Combustible Flammable or Inflammable*-Descriptive of materials that are easily set on fire.

*Combustible Fiber*-Any readily ignitable and free burning fiber such as cotton, oakum, rags, waste cloth, waste paper, kapok, hay, straw, Spanish moss, excelsior and other similar materials commonly used in commerce.

*Combustible Liquid*-Any liquid having a flash point at or above 37.8c (100F)

*Corrose Liquid*-Any liquid which causes fire when in contact with organic matter or with certain chemicals.

*Curtain Board*-A vertical panel of non-combustible or fire resistive materials attached to and extending below the bottom chord of the roof trusses, to divide the underside of the roof into separate compartments, so that heat and smoke will be directed upwards to a roof vent.

*Cryogenic*-Descriptive of any material which by its nature or as result of its reaction with other elements produces a rapid drop in temperature of the immediate surroundings.

*Damper*-A normally open device installed inside an air duct system which automatically closes to restrict the passage of smoke or fire.

*Distillation*-The process of first raising the temperature to separate the more volatile from the less volatile parts and then cooling and condensing the resulting vapor so as to produce a nearly purified substance.

*Duct System*-A continuous passageway for the transmission of air.

*Dust*-A finely powdered substance which, when mixed with air in the proper proportion and ignited will cause an explosion.

*Electrical Arc*-An extremely hot luminous bridge formed by passage of an electric current across a space between two conductors or terminals to the incandescence of the conducting vapor.

*Ember*-A hot piece or lump that remains after a material has partially burned, and still oxidizing without the manifestation of flames.

*Finishes*-Materials used as final coating of a surface for ornamental or protective purposes.

*Fire*-The active principle of burning, characterized by the heat and light of combination.

*Fire Trap*-A building unsafe in case of fire because it will burn easily or because it lacks adequate exits or fire escapes.

*Fire Alarm*-Any visual or audible signal produced by a device or system to warn the occupants of the building or fire fighting elements of the presence or danger of fire to enable them to undertake immediate action to save life and property and to suppress the fire.

*Fire Door*-A fire resistive door prescribed for openings in fire separation walls or partitions.

*Fire Hazard*-Any condition or act which increases or may cause an increase in the probability of the occurrence of fire, or which may obstruct, delay, hinder or interfere with fire fighting operations and the safeguarding of life and property.

*Fire Lane*-The portion of a roadway or public way that should be kept opened and unobstructed at all times for the expedient operation of fire fighting units.

*Fire Protective and Fire Safety Device*-Any device intended for the protection of buildings or persons to include but not limited to built-in protection system such as sprinklers and other automatic extinguishing system, detectors for heat, smoke and combustion products and other warning system components, personal protective equipment such as fire blankets, helmets, fire suits, gloves and other garments that may be put on or worn by persons to protect themselves during fire.

*Fire Safety Constructions*-Refers to design and installation of walls, barriers, doors, windows, vents, means of egress etc. integral to and incorporated into a building or structure in order to minimize danger to life from fire, smoke, fumes or panic before the building is evacuated. These features are also designed to achieve, among others, safe and

rapid evacuation of people through means of egress sealed from smoke or fire, the confinement of fire or smoke in the room or floor of origin and delay their spread to other resistant doors, walls and floors. It shall also mean to parts of the building by means of smoke sealed and fire include the treatment of building components or contents with flame retardant chemicals.

*Flash Point*-The minimum temperature at which any material gives off vapor in sufficient concentration to form an ignitable mixture with air.

*Forcing*-A process where a piece of metal is heated prior to changing its shape or dimensions.

*Fulminate*-A kind of stable explosive compound which explodes by percussion.

*Hazardous Operation/Process*-Any act of manufacturing, fabrication, conversion, etc., that uses or produces materials which are likely to cause fires or explosions.

*Horizontal Exit*-Passageway from one building to another or through or around a wall in approximately the same floor level.

*Hose Box*-A box or cabinet where fire hoses, valves and other equipments are stored and arranged for fire fighting.

*Hose Reel*-A cylindrical device turning on an axis around which a fire hose is wound and connected.

*Hypergolic Fuel*-A rocket or liquid propellant which consist of combinations of fuels and oxidizers which ignite spontaneously on contact with each other.

*Industrial Baking And Drying*-The industrial process of subjecting to heat for the purpose of removing solvents or moisture from the same, and/or to fuse certain chemical salts to form a uniform glazing on the surface of materials being treated.

*Jumper*-A piece of metal or an electrical conductor used to bypass a safety device in an electrical system.

*Occupancy*-The purpose for which a building or portion thereof is used or intended to be used.

*Occupant*-Any person actually occupying and using a building or portions thereof by virtue of a lease contract with the owner or administrator or by permission or sufferance of the latter.

*Organic Peroxide*-A strong oxidizing organic compound which releases oxygen readily, It causes fire when in contact with combustible materials especially under conditions of high temperature.

*Overloading*-The use of one or more electrical appliances or devices which draw or consume electrical current beyond the designed capacity of the existing electrical system.

*Owner*-The person who holds the legal right of possession or title to a building or real property.

*Oxidizing Material*-A material that readily yields oxygen in quantities sufficient to stipulate or support combustion.

*Pressurized Or Forced Draft Burning Equipment*-Type or burner where the fuel is subjected to pressure prior to discharge into the combustion chamber and/or which includes fans or other provisions for the introduction of air at above normal atmospheric pressure into the same combustion chamber.

*Public Assembly Building*-Any building or structure where fifty (50) or more people congregate, gather, or assemble for any purpose.

*Public Way*-Any street, alley or other strip of land unobstructed from the ground to the sky, deeded, dedicated or otherwise permanently appropriated for public use.

*Pyrophoric*-Descriptive of any substance that ignites spontaneously when exposed to air.

*Refining*-A process where impurities and/or deleterious materials are removed from a mixture in order to produce a pure element or compound. It shall also refer to partial distillation and electrolysis.

*Self-Closing Door*-Automatic closing doors that are designed to confine smoke and heat and delay the spread of fire.

*Smelting*-Melting or fusing of metallic ores or compounds so as to separate impurities from pure metals.

*Sprinkler System*-An integrated network or hydraulically designed piping installed in a building, structure or area with outlets arranged in a systematic pattern which automatically discharges water when activated by heat or combustion products from a fire.

*Standpipe System*-A system of vertical pipes in a building to which fire hoses can be attached on each floor, including a system by which water is made available to the outlets as needed.

*Vestibule*-A passage hall or antechamber between the outer doors and the interior parts of a house or building.

*Vertical Shaft*-An enclosed vertical space of passage that extends from floor to floor, as well as from the base to the top of the building.