

# A SHORT REVIEW OF THE RECENT CHANGES AFFECTING THE GREEK FIRE-PROTECTION ACT

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**F**ire protection and safety engineering issues are very important for building designers and users, especially in the tourist period when thousands of citizens move abroad to other sunny countries for short or long term holidays, or to operate seasonal businesses.

The national regulations and code of practice contain common standards in comparison with other Western European Countries and the harmonised European standards – Eurocodes. In Greece, the new electrical installations code for buildings (published in the Government gazette 470B/5-3-2004) complies with the European requirements and the new standard is titled as 'ELOT HD 384'.

The current developments of the Fire-protection Act in Greece are important issues for practitioners, buyers of commercial properties, tourist operators and property investors.

The considerable changes of the Greek Fire-protection Act are reviewed, summarised and reported as shown below:

With new Law K.Y.A. Φ15/οικ. 1589/104/2006 (see Government Gazette 90 B'/30-01-2006) the regulations of the Fire-protection Act altered for heavy and light industrial installations, professional laboratories, storage rooms/warehouses and mechanical installations providing services, that belong under the acts of Law N. 3325/2005 (see Government Gazette 68 A'/11-03-2005).

The most serious changes are as follows:

- The Management of Development Department in the County Councils (Prefectures) get one new duty and in particular it will check and verify the decision-making process for implementing the required measures (derived by regulations) of the Fire-protection Act in all business/enterprises classified under the Category 'O' and for the professional laboratories under the Category 'Aα'
- Registered businesses of Category 'O' are not required to have attached to their licence a Fire-protection certificate, without depending on their sub-power and also the professional laboratories classified in category 'Aα' with sub-power over 22 KW (engine) and 50KW (thermal).
- The professional laboratories classified in category 'Aα' with sub-power over 22 KW (engine) and 50KW (thermal) are discharged from the requirement to submit an approved fire protection study. In order for a Fire protection certificate to be issued at this stage of the process of operational licence (work permit), the investor has to hand over to the (appropriate) Fire Brigade Department only a true copy of the 'footprint' drawing of the subject property that has already been submitted (with ref. number) to the Licence Control Authority at an earlier stage during the process of issuing the 'installations permit'.
- When it is required, the planning and reporting of Fire protection study has been completed at the stage of operational licence (of business).
- For the required Certificate to be issued by the Fire Brigade Department in charge, the owner of the enterprise (business) and the project designer, planning supervisor – site supervisor Engineer has to submit the official form of declaration (based

on law N.1599/1986) that all measures and means of fire protection regulations and codes have been installed in the business that actually correspond to the already approved fire safety engineering study, and then the Fire Brigade Service is obliged to issue the Fire protection certificate as soon as possible. Within a period of two months, an official inspection occurs in the business (premises) in order to verify if all Fire protection regulations are applied (retained) in practice (operational environment). If that is not the case, the Fire Brigade Department in charge officially informs the Licence Control Authority about its comments (including findings, recommendations and instructions), in order to advance the Authority's necessary actions.

- For the first time, there is a duration validation (date of expiry) of eight years for the Fire protection certificate produced. Thus, it now matches with the actual duration of the 'operation licence'. Until now the Fire-protection certificate was valid for only five years.
- New occupational activities (business) are allocated in the risk categories, which were not classified in any category (for assessment), in the past.
- The legal right of the Fire Brigade Department to ask from the applicant investor – business owner to take additional actions above the existing Fire-protection regulations in specific cases is cancelled. But the applicant is responsible for applying the regulations of the approved Fire-protection study, or to submit the legally required Fire-protection study, when he is obliged to comply with laws.
- The enterprises that operate fuel tanks and vessels with a capacity up to 5 cubic metres, which covers their operational needs for fuelling, and also gas supply (LGP) with max volume of two gas units (cylinder bottles), are permitted to be erected in any part of the property, under the legal requirements to construct the safety zones of tanks and also to install a system with detectors for preventing gas (fire and gas detection systems) and other losses.
- For the above-mentioned cases the law does not require an additional and supplementary study (Fire safety engineering study), based on the regulations and codes for fuel tanks and LGP installations.
- With the new law, the renewal of an authorised Certificate is not required in case of new business ownership under the general requirement that the subject Certificate is still valid.
- With the new law, the submission of a new fire safety engineering study is not required for cases of the extension of building or mechanical installations, when additional measures are not required and the risk category of the installation does not change.
- Further information about the Greek Government Gazettes can be found at [www.et.gr](http://www.et.gr)

## References

- Techniko Vhima, SSTE, Issue 4, p 22, 2006.  
Greek Government Gazette 68 A/2005  
Greek Government Gazette 90 B'/2006