



## Virginia State Fire Marshal's Office

1005 Technology Park Drive

Glen Allen, Virginia 23059

Main (804) 371-0220

24-Hour (804) 612-7273

[statefiremarshal@vdfp.virginia.gov](mailto:statefiremarshal@vdfp.virginia.gov)

---

### EXPLOSIVES USE REQUIREMENTS

January 29, 2022

NOTE: This document is not all inclusive. The information contained herein is provided as requirements of the Virginia State Fire Marshal's Office. All persons who possess, store, handle, and use explosives and explosive materials shall have a comprehensive understanding of the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, NFPA codes and standards, and other Federal, State, and Local laws, ordinances, codes and regulations.

#### GENERAL

- Information provided herein is based on the 2018 Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC) with an effective date of July 1, 2021.
- Inspection of explosives use will be conducted at all new sites. Random inspections will occur throughout the duration of the operation / permit.
- The blaster in-charge of the explosives use shall have a valid blaster certification issued by the Virginia State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) on his/her person at all times.
- A valid SFMO Explosives USE Permit shall be on site at all times.
- Explosives use shall only be conducted during daylight hours, and on normal business days (Monday – Friday).
- If explosives use is desired on weekends or state holidays, a written request for approval shall be submitted to the SFMO at least seven (7) calendar days in advance of the desired use. The request shall explain why explosives use on a weekend or holiday is necessary. A list of State holidays can be found at: <http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/payandholidaycalendar>
- All misfires, fly rock incidents, complaints, and/or issues that have the potential to affect public safety shall be immediately reported to the SFMO.
- In addition to other areas that the State Fire Marshal is the AHJ, a SFMO Explosives USE Permit shall be obtained for the use of explosives on all Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) owned property, to include right-of-ways.

#### APPLICATION

- GPS coordinates of use site. This can be a range of coordinates if the site will cover a large area.
- Plan (description) of explosives use to include a site diagram with hazards and distances indicated.
  - Transportation routes: roadways, railways, waterways, walking/bike paths and trails, etc.
  - Utilities: Above- and below-ground.
  - Hazardous materials storage and/or operating facilities.
  - Explosives storage magazines.
  - High occupancy / special concern buildings: Schools, daycares, hospitals, nursing homes, hotels/motels, critical infrastructure, etc.
  - Water wells.

- Copy of the current Contractor License with classification of Blast/Explosive (BEC) from Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (DPOR) – Board for Contractors.
- Copy of current Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives – ATF License(s) and Permit(s).
- EMERGENCY or SPECIAL OPERATION. When the need to use explosives is justifiably considered an emergency condition, or for special operations, neither of which can wait for the normal application and review process, the requirement for a permit prior to use is waived. An application for Explosives USE Permit must be submitted within two business days after such use.

## FEES / PERMIT

- Applications must be received by the SFMO not less than 15 calendar days prior to the planned use. Applications received less than 15-days prior to the planned use will be assessed a \$500 expedited handling fee.
- Use of explosives and blasting agents, non-fixed site (6-month permit) \$250 per site, plus inspection fee.
- Use of explosives and blasting agents, fixed site (12-month permit) \$250 per site.
- Inspection fees will be assessed at a rate of \$60 per staff member per hour during normal business hours (Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) and at a rate of \$90 per hour at all other times (weekends and holidays).
  - Inspection includes the handling (hole loading) and use (firing) of explosives.
  - An inspection time sheet that requires the blaster’s and inspector’s signature will be completed on-site. A copy will be provided to the permit holder within two business days.
  - The permit holder is responsible for the assessed fees. Billing will occur on a monthly basis.

## NOTIFICATION

As provided in Section 107.1 of the 2015 SFPC all persons or companies in possession of a permit to USE explosives issued by the SFMO shall provide notice of intent to use explosives to the SFMO at least five (5) calendar days prior to planned explosives use. The notice can list planned use for up to five consecutive business days (Monday – Friday).

Notification to the SFMO shall be accomplished by one of the following methods (in order of preference):

1. Complete the online Explosives Use Notification form.  
[www.vafire.com/about-virginia-department-of-fire-programs/forms/state-fire-marshals-office-explosives-use-notification/](http://www.vafire.com/about-virginia-department-of-fire-programs/forms/state-fire-marshals-office-explosives-use-notification/)
2. Provide the required information by email to:  
[statefiremarshal@vdfp.virginia.gov](mailto:statefiremarshal@vdfp.virginia.gov)

Notification must include the following information:

1. The date(s) and approximate time(s) of the planned explosive use.
2. The approximate time explosives will arrive at the site.
3. The SFMO USE Permit Number under which the shot will be conducted and the certification number of the blaster in charge.
4. The address or location and GPS coordinates of the planned explosives use including the name of the city, county or town.
5. If the USE of explosives was under emergency conditions provide a brief description of the emergency.
6. The name of the person providing the notification.
7. A phone number for the person making the notification.
8. A mobile phone number of the blaster in charge

## SITE

- The Blast Site and Blast Area shall be secure and posted. Approved barricades and/or adequate number of security personnel shall be provided.
- Explosives shall be loaded in bore holes for the purpose of firing the same day before sundown. If circumstances occur that will prevent the firing of explosives before sundown the SFMO shall be notified immediately. Approved blast site and blast area security shall be provided until daylight of the next day.
- Communicate with facilities containing high occupancy / special concern to determine safe times or conditions for when explosives can be fired.
- All explosives use within 300 feet of congested area [SFPC 5607.3] shall comply with the following:
  1. A minimum of 8-feet of cover must exist from the top of the highest column charge to the ground surface. This can be accomplished by good overburden soil and/or the placement of additional clean soil over the blast area. In all cases blasting mats shall be used.
  2. All vehicular, vessel, and pedestrian traffic shall be controlled when firing explosives. All traffic shall remain controlled until the all-clear signal is provided.
  3. All persons within 500 feet of the blast site shall be provided notification of intent to use explosives at least 2-days prior to use. When explosives are used in the open-air the distance for notification shall be 1,500 feet.
  4. Pre- and post-blast audible warning signals shall provided.
- Misfires shall be handled in compliance with the SFPC, NFPA 495, manufacturer's instructions, and/or IME Publication #17.