WHITE PAPER

Steps to Achieve NFPA 70B Compliance

The 2023 Edition
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The 2023 edition of NFPA 70B represents a major shift—it's now a **mandatory standard** rather than a recommended practice. This means facilities must establish and maintain formal Electrical Maintenance Programs (EMPs). Here's a comprehensive roadmap to compliance:

1. Designate an Electrical Maintenance Coordinator

Appoint a qualified individual to:

- Coordinate, implement, and operate the EMP
- Ensure personnel are properly trained
- Conduct regular equipment inspections
- Integrate the EMP with broader safety programs
- Maintain familiarity with NFPA 70 (NEC), NFPA 70E, and NFPA 70B

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2. Perform a Current State Assessment

Conduct a thorough review of your existing electrical systems:

- **Review diagrams and studies** to ensure they reflect current configurations
- **Analyze systems and procedures** for non-compliance gaps
- **Review record-keeping procedures** and existing documentation
- **Categorize electrical equipment** by type, criticality, and condition
- ***Perform initial inspections or tests*** to establish baseline conditions

3. Update Single-Line Diagrams (SLDs) and Studies

Ensure all documentation is current (especially if older than 5 years):

- Single-line diagrams
- Arc flash studies
- Short circuit studies
- Load flow studies
- Reliability studies

4. Address Non-Compliance Issues

Correct any identified deficiencies according to:

- NFPA 70B guidelines
- Manufacturer recommendations
- Applicable codes and standards

5. Establish Maintenance Intervals

Determine maintenance schedules based on:

- Equipment physical condition
- Criticality to operations
- Operating environment
- Manufacturer recommendations
- **NFPA 70B Chapter 9, Table 9.2.2**
  (mandatory scopes and intervals when manufacturer guidance is unavailable)

6. Develop and Implement a Formal EMP

Your Electrical Maintenance Program must include:

Personnel & Responsibilities:

- Identification of individuals responsible for maintenance and safety
- Training requirements per NFPA 70B and 70E

Maintenance Procedures:

- Cleaning, lubrication, and mechanical servicing protocols
- Inspection procedures
- Testing methods (Chapter 8: Field Testing and Test Methods)
- Preventive maintenance scopes

Documentation:

- Policy for documentation and record retention
- Maintenance records
- Equipment records
- Personnel training records

Continuous Improvement:

- Process for prescribing and documenting corrective measures
- Process for incorporating design changes
- Maintenance priorities based on equipment surveys and analysis

7. Update Documentation and Indicators

- Store all documents in an easily accessible location
- Use visual indicators (decals, labels) to show equipment condition and maintenance status
- Ensure the electrical maintenance coordinator has ready access to all records

8. Implement Continuous Improvement

- Conduct regular audits (at least **every 5 years**)
- Provide ongoing training for personnel
- Review and update the EMP based on collected data and operational changes
- Monitor equipment performance and adjust maintenance intervals as needed

Key Changes in the 2023 Edition

Critical Updates:

- **Mandatory language:** "Shall" replaces "should"—requirements are now obligatory
- **Required EMPs:** Formal programs are mandatory, not optional
- **Condition-based maintenance:** Intervals based on actual equipment condition, criticality, and environment
- **Strict documentation:** Formal recordkeeping is required
- **Personnel training:** Mandatory training per NFPA 70B and 70E

Compliance Note

While NFPA 70B isn't directly law, **OSHA can cite facilities for non-compliance**. It's considered the minimum consensus requirement for safe electrical work practices, making compliance both a safety imperative and a regulatory necessity.

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