

Determining Class 8B Eligibility

Class 8B is a Public Protection Classification (PPC™) for fire departments that provide superior fire-protection services and fire-alarm facilities but lack the required water supply for Class 8 or better (a minimum of 250 gpm for two hours). Specifically, Class 8B acknowledges a fire department and alarm system that would be eligible for Class 6 or better if there were sufficient water. Without the superior fire department and alarm system, an area with such limited water would be eligible for only a Class 9.

Class 8B applies to fire departments that meet all established Class 8B criteria and can deliver the minimum fire flow to at least 85 percent of the built-upon area of the fire protection area within five (all-weather) road miles of a recognized fire station.

Class 8B can be the sole classification of a jurisdiction, the secondary classification in a split class, or the primary classification in a split class. Thus, the published class could be 8B, X/8B, or 8B/10. However, a split classification cannot include both Class 8B and Class 9. For example, a jurisdiction can be 6/8B or 6/8B/10, but it cannot be 8B/9, 6/8B/9, or 6/8B/9/10.

Class 8B applies to both residential and commercial/industrial properties.

Here are some questions to help you determine whether your fire department qualifies for Class 8B:

- 1. Can the fire department — on its own or with the help of automatic-aid fire departments — deliver an uninterrupted fire flow of 200 gpm for 20 minutes, beginning within 5 minutes of the first arriving engine company?*

This is a performance-related criterion. You can supply the required fire flow in any of a number of ways. The most common is water carried to the fire scene on responding apparatus.

ISO does *not* need to field-verify the fire flow with a demonstration of capability. Instead, ISO will calculate the capability, considering pump capacity and tank size of the fire-site pumper, the tank size of additional responding apparatus, and response travel distances.

The calculation does not include allowances for incomplete filling, incomplete discharging, and spillage. The calculation does, however, take into account overweight apparatus. If the apparatus is over the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) for its chassis, ISO will reduce the creditable capacity for the apparatus to the capacity that would bring the weight within the GVWR.

You can use automatic aid to assist in meeting the required fire-flow criterion. Automatic aid exists when two fire-protection jurisdictions have an agreement in which one commits to dispatch fire apparatus from a recognized fire department to respond — automatically on first alarm — to reported structure fires within the fire-protection area boundaries of the other.

Within that definition, an agreement can include a contract or a demonstrated track record. You can document a demonstrated track record with fire incident reports, the protocol of a computer-aided dispatch system, or dispatch running cards.

2. *Do the primary fire department and any automatic-aid departments respond with a combined average of at least six firefighters on first-alarm responses to structure fires?*

You need an average of at least six firefighters responding on first alarm. That includes four firefighters at the scene for fire attack and two driver/operators for the hauled-water apparatus. ISO will determine the average number of responding firefighters from fire incident reports of responses in the area where Class 8B will apply. For the purpose of meeting this criterion, you may include all responding automatic-aid personnel. One of the six firefighters may be a chief officer.

3. *Do the primary responding fire department and any automatic-aid fire departments conduct a minimum of 24 hours per year of training in fighting structure fires for active firefighters?*

Active firefighters are those who, through their attendance at training drills, response to fires, and participation in other fire department activities, have demonstrated that they are most likely to respond to structure fires. It is *not* necessary that every member of the fire department receive 24 hours of training per year, nor is it necessary that the fire department achieve 100 percent attendance at its training drills. It *is* necessary, however, that the department conduct at least 24 hours of training per year and that attendance at the training be such that active firefighters considered in determining Class 8B eligibility will, on average, have had a minimum of 24 hours of training in fighting structure fires over the previous 12 months.

ISO will make allowances for personnel on special administrative assignment or extended leave and for recent hires. For personnel with less than a full year of active firefighting duty, the minimum required training in fighting structure fires is the number of months of their active firefighting duty times two.

The training can include classroom education on fighting structure fires (including college courses and the like), as well as engine-, ladder-, and ladder/service-company drills. Attendance at a fire training center with a drill tower, provisions for live fire training, and drill grounds is not necessary, but ISO does encourage such training.

In determining the average hours of training, you should include automatic-aid personnel only when you need such personnel to provide the minimum of six firefighters responding on first alarm.

4. *Can the fire department — on its own or with the help of automatic-aid fire departments — deliver the minimum fire flow to at least 85 percent of the built-upon areas of their service area within five (all-weather) road miles of a recognized fire station?*

The built-upon area excludes Class 10 areas (where properties are more than five road miles from the responding fire station), as well as areas where, because of their ownership or nature, future building is unlikely. (For example, future building is unlikely on golf courses, state and national forests, lakes, ponds, rivers, swamps, and wetlands.) In addition, you may exclude large unbuilt areas of schools, colleges, and other institutions.

ISO will measure the fire department's ability to satisfy this criterion by considering the response within their service area in multiple directions (generally north, south, east, and west) from each recognized fire station, to a distance of up to five road miles. In split-class jurisdictions, we will consider the built-upon area in only the parts of the jurisdiction without hydrants.

5. *Are the alarm and dispatch facilities serving the fire department eligible for a credit of 5 points under Item 440 (Credit for Receiving and Handling Fire Alarms)?*

The alarm and dispatch facilities must be eligible for a credit of a minimum of 5 points under Item 440 of the Fire Suppression Rating Schedule. Any combination of points under Item 440 counts toward the minimum of 5 points.

6. *Is the fire department eligible for a credit of 20 points under Item 590 (Credit for Fire Department)?*

The fire department must be eligible for a credit of a minimum of 20 points under Item 590 of the Fire Suppression Rating Schedule. Any combination of points under Item 590 counts toward the minimum of 20 points.

To determine the needed engine companies, ISO will use the actual Basic Fire Flow of the entire area served by the fire department that is within 5 road miles of a recognized fire station. In jurisdictions having a potential for both Class 1 to 8 areas and Class 8B areas, the following procedures apply:

- ISO will determine Basic Fire Flow (FSRS Item 501) for Class 1 to 8 areas based solely upon properties covered by the recognized water supply.
- ISO will determine Basic Fire Flow for Class 8B areas based upon properties located in the entire area covered by the fire district (within five road miles of the recognized fire stations). That is, we will use properties in both the areas covered by the recognized water supply considered for Class 1 to 8 *and* properties outside those areas but within five road miles of a recognized fire station.

The checklist on the following page summarizes the requirements for Class 8B.

Class 8B Checklist

1.	Can the fire department — on its own or with the help of automatic-aid fire departments — deliver an uninterrupted fire flow of 200 gpm for 20 minutes beginning within 5 minutes of the first arriving engine company?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2.	Do the primary fire department and any automatic-aid response departments respond with an average of at least six firefighters on first-alarm responses to structure fires?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3.	Do the primary responding fire department and any automatic-aid fire departments conduct a minimum of 24 hours per year of training in fighting structure fires for active firefighters?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4.	Can the fire department — on its own or with the help of automatic-aid fire departments — deliver the minimum fire flow to at least 85 percent of the built-upon areas of its service area within five (all-weather) road miles of a recognized fire station?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5.	Are the alarm and dispatch facilities serving the fire department eligible for a credit of at least 5 points under Item 440 (<i>Credit for Receiving and Handling Fire Alarms</i>)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
6.	Is the fire department eligible for a credit of at least 20 points under Item 590 (<i>Credit for Fire Department</i>)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

If all answers are “yes,” then the jurisdiction is eligible for Class 8B.