



Virginia Department of Fire Programs State Fire Marshal's Office



FIRE INSPECTION SELF-HELP GUIDE FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BUSINESSES

Because each facility or property has its own unique characteristics, only items generally checked during routine inspections are included in the following list.

Please utilize this checklist to help maintain a "Fire Safe" environment throughout the year.

1. Emergency Lighting/Egress Lighting

- Does the facility have emergency egress lighting with battery back-up capability?
- Are the Emergency Egress Lights routinely cleaned, inspected, and tested on a monthly basis?
- Is the emergency lighting adequate or does it need improvement to provide adequate emergency egress illumination?
- Does storage, furnishings, or decorations obscure the Emergency Egress Lights?
- Is Remote Egress Lighting installed on the exterior of the facility at all designated Exit locations?
- If Emergency Egress Lighting is provided through a generator, is the generator routinely serviced, exercised, and are maintenance records current and available for review?
- Are emergency generators regularly tested per NFPA 110?

2. Fire Extinguishers

- Does the facility have the proper number and type of fire extinguishers?
 - Are the fire extinguishers mounted in visible locations to which the occupants have access?
 - Are the fire extinguishers routinely visually inspected on a monthly basis?
 - Are the fire extinguishers pinned and sealed to prevent accidental discharge?
 - Are the Inspection tags and the inspection checked and initialed on a monthly basis?
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- Do welding carts and forklifts have mounted fire extinguishers?
- When was the last hydrostatic inspection on the fire extinguisher cylinders?
- Are the fire extinguishers in compliance with NFPA 10?
- Are facility personnel properly trained in the emergency use of fire extinguishers?
- Is a K class fire extinguisher used in conjunction with wet chemical kitchen fire suppressions systems?

3. Exit Signs/Mean of Egress

- Do all means of egress routes have proper Exit signage with directional arrows (if required)?
- Are the Exit signs illuminated at all times?
- Do the Exit signs have battery back-up in case of power failure?
- Does storage, furnishings, or decorations obscure the Exit signs?
- Are the Exit Lights routinely cleaned, inspected, and tested on a monthly basis?
- Do additional Exit Signs need to be installed to adequately direct evacuation in the event of an emergency?

4. Exit/Egress Doors

- Do all Means of Egress doors readily open from the side which egress is to be made without a key, special knowledge or effort?
 - Do Exit/Egress Doors have prohibited locking mechanisms such as special fasteners, chains, or deadbolts?
 - Are all doors, passageways, and stairways that are not a Means of Egress, nor provide a Means of Egress, properly identified (labeled) so as not to be mistaken for a Means of Egress?
 - Are all Exit/Egress Doors properly maintained?
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- If your facility is unsprinklered, do corridors that serve more than one exit have dead-end passageways that exceed 35 feet in length? If your facility is sprinklered, do corridors that serve more than one exit have dead-end passageways that exceed 70 feet in length?
- In rooms where chairs or tables and chairs are utilized, do aisles have a minimum clear width of 44 inches (>50 occupants) or 36 inches (<=50 occupants)?
- Do chairs, tables, or other objects obstruct aisles?
- Are doors blocked by storage of materials?

5. Fire Rated Doors/Walls/Assemblies

- Are all Fire-Resistant rated assemblies being maintained? If previously damaged, altered, or penetrated, have these rated assemblies been properly repaired and restored according to the Fire and Building Code requirements?
 - Are all Fire-rated Doors and Smoke Barrier Doors being adequately maintained, including all associated hardware necessary for proper operation?
 - Are unapproved and prohibited hold-open devices such as wedges, doorstops, rocks, rope, etc., being used to keep Fire Doors/Smoke and Smoke Barrier Doors open?
 - Are automatic closure devices (smoke detectors) used in conjunction with some Fire Door Assemblies cleaned, inspected, and tested on an annual basis?
 - Do all of your Fire-Rated Doors swing and close from the full-open position and latch automatically?
 - Does the closure mechanism exert enough force to close and latch the door from any partially open position?
 - Are all horizontal or vertical rolling fire doors properly maintained, inspected, and tested annually?
 - Is a written record of the results of the inspection and testing being maintained and made available to the Fire Marshal Inspector?
 - Are fusible links being properly maintained and inspected? If the fusible links were found painted, corroded, damaged, or loaded with foreign materials, have they been replaced with new links?
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6. Storage of Materials/Materials Handling Systems (Including Flammable and Combustible Liquids)

- Has good housekeeping been made a priority, with all materials, processes, and storage being kept in a neat and orderly fashion on both the interior and exterior of the building?
 - Are conveyor systems properly maintained, routinely inspected, and kept free of trash and other combustible debris?
 - Are materials/goods being stored too close to the ceiling? (Unsprinklered Areas - 24" Clearance, Sprinklered Areas - 18" clearance)
 - Is the storage of materials or commodities blocking access to fire protection systems or equipment (Blocked sprinkler control valves, blocked standpipe connections, blocked fire extinguisher cabinets)?
 - Is the storage of materials significantly reducing aisle widths?
 - Is storage of materials or racking/conveyor systems blocking emergency egress lighting or exit lighting?
 - Is combustible/flammable storage blocking access to electrical service cabinets? (30" clearance required)
 - Are materials being stored on stairwell landings, or on stairs?
 - Do you have combustible/flammable material being stored under stairwells?
 - Are materials being stored within 36" of a gas-fired appliance (water heater, furnace, etc.)?
 - Do you have storage that is blocking sprinkler control valves, inspectors test valves, or gas valves/meters?
 - Are all flammable liquids being stored in approved flammable liquids cabinets?
 - Is gasoline being stored in approved safety cans inside of flammable liquids cabinets?
 - Are all containers properly labeled as to the contents?
 - Are gasoline-powered items being stored inside the facility with fuel in the tanks?
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- Is smoking and open flames prohibited in areas where combustible or flammable liquids are stored?
- Are "NO SMOKING" signs posted?

7. Hazardous Materials/Pressure Cylinders/Containers-

- Are all compressed gas cylinders in storage or service properly secured (chained) to prevent falling or being knocked over or according to requirements listed in NFPA 50, NFPA 50A, and NFPA 99?
 - Are incompatible chemicals being stored together or in alphabetical order?
 - Are Oxygen cylinders being stored separately (as they should be) from other types of compressed cylinders?
 - Do you have all propane cylinders for forklifts stored in a fenced or caged area on the exterior of the building?
 - If you are storing propane cylinders for forklifts on the interior of the building, are provisions being made for storing them on the exterior of the building?
 - Are protective caps or valve protection devices in place on compressed gas cylinders?
 - Is your facility storing all pressurized aerosol cans in a flammable liquids cabinet or caged-in area or according to requirements listed in NFPA 30 and NFPA 30B.
 - Are Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) being kept on file for each chemical used at your facility?
 - Are MSDS sheets kept together in a readily accessible location identifiable to the Fire Department?
 - Are all outside storage containers properly labeled as to the contents contained therein?
 - Do you have an approved fire suppression system in areas where flammable liquids are sprayed or stored?
 - Are outside hazardous materials storage areas adequately protected from truck/vehicle traffic?
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8. Electrical Considerations

- Does your facility have bare bulbs, exposed wiring, outlet/junction box cover plates missing, altered circuit breaker panels, or unlabeled electrical panels?
- Are all protective covers or globes in place on light fixtures?
- Are light duty extension cords (zip cords) being used in office, vending, or kitchen areas?
- Do you have extension cords being utilized in lieu of permanent wiring?
- Are ground fault circuit interrupters in use near sinks or areas prone to potential electrical shock?
- Does the wiring in your facility comply with NFPA 70 (National Electrical Code)?
- In areas containing hazardous atmospheres, is the electrical service explosion proof in accordance with NFPA 70, National Electrical Code?
- Are tamper devices installed on fire alarm system circuit breakers?
- In child-care areas, are safety plugs installed in unused electrical receptacles?

9. Above-Ground Fuel Tanks / Pumping Sites

- Are your tanks properly diked or vaulted for spill containment?
 - Are the Tanks properly labeled in accordance with NFPA 30/30A (Flammable and Combustible Liquids Code)?
 - Do your tanks, pumping equipment, dispensing equipment, and fueling control systems comply with NFPA 30/30A?
 - Are your above-ground fuel tanks properly vented?
 - Are emergency shut-off controls in place and tested on an annual basis?
 - Are dispensing hoses equipped with automatic self-closing type nozzles?
 - If fuel dispensing is done on the interior of the facility is there an approved automatic fire suppression system installed as required by the Virginia building and fire codes?
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- Do you have the required portable fire extinguisher with a 2-A:40-B;C rating, within 30 feet of the fuel dispensing location?
- Is the electrical service intrinsically safe and explosion proof in accordance with NFPA 70, National Electrical Code?
- Have personnel been properly trained in fuel dispensing and safety related issues?
- Are "NO SMOKING" signs posted at fuel dispensing site?
- Are "STOP ENGINE" signs posted at fuel dispensing site?
- Are other appropriate warning signs posted at the fuel-dispensing site?

10. Fire Alarm Systems

- Is your system current, centrally monitored, and meeting the requirements under NFPA 72 (National Fire Alarm Code)?
- Is your system maintained and inspected on a regular basis? Are all devices, including horns, bells, and strobes listed by location on the inspection report?
- Are the annunciation panels in a location readily accessible to the Fire Marshal Inspector?
- Are the installed detection devices tested on at least an annual basis? Are all smoke detectors tested per NFPA 72 for sensitivity?

11. Commercial Kitchen Hood Systems

- Is the fire suppression hood system maintained, inspected, cleaned, and tested at least semi- annually?
- Are maintenance and testing records maintained at the facility available for review by the Fire Marshal Inspector?

12. Fire Suppression Systems

- Do your systems meet NFPA standards associated with each particular system or system component?
 - Is the fire suppression system maintained, inspected, cleaned, and tested at least annually?
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- Are maintenance and testing records maintained at the facility available for review by the Fire Marshal Inspector?
- Have alterations been made to the facility (interior room additions, mezzanines, storage areas, etc.) which defeats the currently installed system or which may not provide adequate protection?
- Due to changes in your facility operations, are additional fire suppression systems required to provide adequate protection for your facility?
- Do you have fire suppression systems that are in locations subject to freezing temperatures?
- Does your company secure (lock and chain) or monitor (electronic tamper switches) all fire suppression system valves including post indicator valves?
- Are spare sprinkler heads / wrench present in a cabinet near the sprinkler risers?

13. Fire Lanes/Fire Hydrants/Fire Department Connections

- Are the Fire Lane areas properly identified with signs and striping on the pavement?
 - Are there storage items, trash containers, storage containers, or vehicles blocking access to fire hydrants, Fire Department Connections or Fire lanes?
 - Does the facility have landscaping, fencing, or other items that would interfere with Fire Department access in an emergency?
 - Are your fire hydrants serviced annually by a licensed fire protection contractor to ensure proper operation? Fire hydrants require annual preventive maintenance if they are to work properly. Will the hydrant caps turn freely?
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