

# FIRE MARSHAL INSPECTION CHECKLIST



Regular inspections by your local fire marshal, or other Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ), is a common part of doing business. Since these visits often confuse people, here is a checklist of what fire marshals inspect during their visit. Use this checklist as a guide to help keep your facility safe from common hazards.

## 1 CLEAR PATHS OF EGRESS

The Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) will look closely at the paths of egress at your premises, and whether these are blocked or obstructed in any way. **Be sure...**

- A path which is at least 36 inches wide, leads to every exit door.
- Exit doors can be opened easily and are unlocked.
- Your facility has fire doors that can close without obstruction and are not propped open with anything that could prevent them from closing.



### Did You Know?

Every building or structure (new or old) designed for human occupancy is to have exits sufficient to permit the prompt escape of occupants in case of fire or other emergency.

## 2 EXIT / EMERGENCY LIGHTS

All paths of egress are required to be unobstructed, and must be clearly marked as well. In the event of a fire, your facility may lose power or visibility may be severely reduced due to heavy smoke. **Be sure...**

- All exit signs have backup batteries.
- Emergency light bulbs are working.
- Emergency lights or exit signs are inspected monthly and annually.



### Did You Know?

Emergency lights or exit signs should be inspected at least once a month, including a 30-second test of the lights. An annual test is also required, with the lights being operated on "battery-power" for the duration of 90-minutes. Written records documenting these tests must be maintained and available for the AHJ.

## 3 SPRINKLERS / KITCHEN SYSTEMS

If your facility has a fire sprinkler system in place, this will be carefully inspected by the fire marshal. **Be sure...**

- Your facility has at least 18 inches of clearance around each sprinkler deflector.
- An annual inspection of your fire sprinklers has been carried out by qualified personnel and documented.



### Did You Know?

A common code violation is storing boxes or other items too high, or having large furniture or shelving units placed in close proximity to the sprinkler head.

## 4 FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEM WATER SUPPLY

For this system to function correctly, not only must the sprinkler deflectors have the proper clearance, the water must flow properly when called upon to extinguish a fire. **Be sure...**

- Valves are all in good working order.
- Hose connections are in good working order.
- Fire department connections are in good working order.
- There are no signs of leakage.
- There is no physical damage, corrosion, or obstruction by foreign materials or paint.

## 5

### FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Fire extinguishers are intended as a first line of defense to cope with fires of limited size. A small fire can often be extinguished quickly by a well-trained individual with a portable extinguisher. **Be sure...**

- Fire extinguishers are conspicuously located where they are readily accessible and immediately available in the event of a fire.
- Fire extinguishers are located along normal paths of travel, including exits from areas.
- Fire extinguishers have been inspected at intervals not exceeding 31 days.
- Fire extinguishers have received maintenance within the past 12 months.
- Fire extinguishers are installed on hangers intended for the extinguisher, in cabinets, or in wall recesses.
- All fire extinguishers should be no less than 4 inches from the floor. Extinguishers exceeding 40lbs are installed so the top of the fire extinguisher handle is no more than 3 ½ feet from the ground. For fire extinguishers Under 40 lbs the maximum height is 5 feet.
- The fire extinguishers are the correct type to combat the fire hazard present at your location.

## 6

### SMOKE ALARMS / ALARM PANELS

The panel is responsible for controlling the system of fire alarms present at your facility. The fire marshal will inspect the fire alarm panel to ensure that the annually required maintenance and inspection by qualified personnel has taken place and is documented. **Be sure...**

- Your inspection tags are up to date.
- No warning lights are illuminated on your panel.



#### Did You Know?

Install smoke detectors away from windows, doors, or ducts that can interfere with their operation.



Never remove the battery from or disable a smoke alarm. If your smoke alarm is sounding "nuisance alarms", try locating it further from kitchens or bathrooms.



Plan regular fire drills to practice your escape plan, ensuring everyone in your business knows exactly what to do when the smoke alarm sounds.

## 7

### PROPER STORAGE OF COMBUSTIBLE LIQUIDS

Combustible materials and liquids represent a special fire hazard and must be treated accordingly. These will provide fuel to any fire. **Be sure...**

- All explosive materials and/or potentially hazardous materials are stored in a fireproof cabinet.

## 8

### MAXIMUM OCCUPANCY LIMITS

Your building has a maximum occupancy limit which has been put in place for a reason. If a fire were to occur, this is the number of people who could safely evacuate the premises in a timely fashion. **Be sure...**

- Your facility is not exceeding the maximum allowable occupants.

## 9

### GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING

Believe it or not, the fire marshal will pay close attention to the overall appearance of your business. **Be sure...**

- To reduce clutter that might interfere with someone's ability to safely reach an exit, or that might make it difficult for the fire department to get to someone who needs help.

## 10

### ELECTRICAL PANELS & CORDS

Pay attention to those outlets and electrical panels in your building. They must be unobstructed and accessible at all times. **Be sure...**

- To leave 3 feet of clearance in front of the panel. Any flammable items (like cardboard boxes) must not be stored too close to the panel.
- There are not multiple extension cords plugged into the same outlet.
- Any unused breaker slots should have a filler plate installed for safety.