

# 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 are unannounced, we put together a checklist of common elements fire marshals may inspect during their visit. Use this checklist as a guide to help keep your facility safe from common hazards.

**NOTE:** Each facility is different and may require additional steps not listed in the following checklist. For a complete guide, contact your local fire marshal or AHJ.

## 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.

## 3 FIRE SPRINKLERS

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

- Your facility has at least 18 inches of clearance below and 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.

## 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 are lit and 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 shall 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.

## 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 suppress 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.

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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.
- Fire extinguishers exceeding 40lbs are installed so that the top of the fire extinguisher handle is not more than 48 inches above the floor.
- The fire extinguishers are the correct type to combat the fire hazard present at your location.

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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.

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USING EXTENSION CORDS CORRECTLY

Believe it or not, the fire marshal will pay close attention to your electrical outlets. **Be sure...**

- There are not two or more extension cords plugged into the same outlet at the same time.

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FIRE ALARM PANELS

The fire alarm panel is responsible for controlling the system of fire alarms present at your facility. The fire marshal may 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.

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Did You Know?

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

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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.

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

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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.

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ELECTRICAL PANELS

Getting to the electrical panels in your building may be required for regular maintenance. They must be unobstructed and accessible at all times. **Be sure...**

- Any potentially flammable items (like cardboard boxes) are not stored too close to the panel in order to avoid fire risk.
- You leave 3 feet of clearance in front of the panel.
- Any unused breaker slots should have a filler plate installed for safety.

