
Chapter X Inspection Duties

Subject 1 Conducting Fire Prevention Inspections

1001.01 Objective

- A. To conduct fire prevention inspections of all structures buildings and premises as often as may be necessary for the purpose of ascertaining and causing to be corrected any conditions liable to cause fire, endanger life from fire or any violations of the provisions or intent of the Cincinnati Fire Prevention Code, the Ohio Fire Code or other ordinance affecting the fire hazard.

1001.03 The following books are adopted by reference as part of this Chapter.

- A. Cincinnati Fire Prevention Code
- B. C.F.D. Report Manual
- C. C.F.D. Fire Protection Systems, testing guidelines.
- D. Current Ohio Fire Code

1001.05 Preparing to Inspect

- A. Inspections are usually conducted during normal business hours without advance notice to the property owner or agent.
- B. Under special circumstances advance arrangements should be made.
- C. Small, low hazard occupancies such as dwellings and small business establishments require little preparation on the part of the inspector.
- D. Larger, more complex and/or high hazard occupancies will require the inspector to research applicable codes and special hazards associated with the property, prior to inspecting. (Annual permit renewals, Right to Know, etc.)
- E. All members shall carry their Cincinnati Fire Department I.D. card while inspecting.
- F. The inspector will carry any special equipment necessary to complete a specific inspection.
- G. The inspector will be equipped with the following as a minimum:
 - 1. Cincinnati Fire Prevention Code (CFPC)
 - 2. Current Ohio Fire Code (OFC)
 - 3. Flashlight
 - 3. Any necessary blank Form 109s
 - 4. Clipboard
 - 5. Black ink pen

1001.07 Conducting the Inspection

- A. Interior and exterior inspections are required of all structures.
- B. Outside only inspections are not permissible. The only exceptions are vacant buildings that are boarded up and/or hazardous to enter. Should admittance be refused consult the Code Enforcement Bureau of the Fire Prevention Division.
- C. The inspector will first make a visual inspection of the exterior of the property and/or building before entering the structure. The exterior inspection will aid the inspector in making a systematic inspection of complex properties as well as determining construction and utility information.
- D. All inspections will be conducted in a systematic manner, inspecting every area. Areas inspected shall be documented in the Fire Inspection Module under the scope of the inspection.
- E. Inspectors must introduce themselves, state their business and secure permission to inspect from someone in authority. In dwellings, this is usually the owner or occupant. In business occupancies, permission to inspect must come from the owner, agent, manager or other person in authority. Under no circumstances, will an inspector inspect a property with permission of a minor or when no person other than a minor is present.
- F. The inspector will attempt to create a favorable impression while inspecting by being courteous and professional. Under no circumstances will the inspector engage in arguments.
- G. The inspector will obey all safety rules required by the management of employees including wearing safety glasses, hard hats, etc.
- H. The inspector will take notes of all important features, discuss hazards and issue violations as necessary to the person in authority. It is preferred that the property owner, agent, manager tenant or knowledgeable employee accompanies the inspector.
- I. Refrain from any unnecessary conversation or interfering with operations.
- J. Under no circumstances will the inspector test equipment, alarm systems or fire suppression systems.

Per the Ohio Fire Code, all fire detection, alarm and extinguishing systems (standpipe, sprinkler, hood suppression systems) shall be tested and maintained as required by the referenced National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standard for that system and shall be maintained on the premises for a minimum of three years and made available to the fire code official upon request. Failure to make available these records upon request shall be cited as a violation of the Ohio Fire Code 901.6.2. Defects listed in test records shall be cited as a violation of the Ohio Fire Code 901.6.

- K. The inspector shall conduct a final conference with the owner, occupant, agent, manager or other person in authority before leaving the premises. After inputting the inspection results in the Fire Inspection Module, a copy of the Fire

CONDUCTING FIRE PREVENTION INSPECTIONS

Section 1001

Rev. 3/15

Page 3 of 10

Department Inspection Form shall be delivered to the owner, agent, or responsible person by means of hand delivery or certified mail. The inspector will explain all violations and recommendations to the owner, the goal being voluntary code compliance. It is NOT the inspector's duty to tell the responsible person how to correct a hazard, but to cite code requirements.

- L. New and existing buildings shall have approved address numbers displayed in a visible and legible manner as outlined in the Ohio Fire Code 505.1. Missing premise identification shall be cited as a violation.

1001.09 Company Officer Inspections

- A. Company Commanders or the Code Enforcement Bureau of the Fire Prevention Division will identify properties to be inspected by Company Officers. These properties will be selected on the basis of extreme life, fire or explosion hazards.
- B. Company Officers shall inspect properties that the inspector has questions about before referring fire code violations to the Code Enforcement Bureau of the Fire Prevention Division.
- C. Inspection of nursing homes shall be made by Company Officers only. The administrator or other responsible person must receive a copy of the Fire Department Inspection Form as they must submit a fire inspection report to the Board of Health to be licensed.

1001.11 Ethical Conduct

- A. Inspectors shall not accept any gift or valuable from a person who occupies, manages, or owns a building they are inspecting or in any way secure personal gain as a result of a fire inspection.
- B. Inspectors shall not recommend a vendor or contractor to the exclusion of other similar contractors to perform work required, or recommended, as a result of a fire inspection.
- C. No member of the fire force shall inspect property belonging to the member, a relative, or off day employer.

Any member assigned an inspection that would come under the above description must inform their supervisor, who will assign the inspection to another member at an appropriate time and keep an accurate record of each incident so that information will be quickly available upon request.

It will be the sole responsibility of the inspector to inform their supervisor when this situation occurs. Severe penalties, with the possibility of dismissal, may result from violation of this order.

- D. Where serious violations of Fire or Building Department regulations exist on a property where a Fire Fighter is employed, it is the member's duty to notify the owner or employer so corrective action can be taken. If corrective action is not taken, it is the member's responsibility to notify the proper authority.

It may be considered neglect of duty where it is established that a member of the fire department neglected to take proper action when the course of their off duty employment would put them in a position to have knowledge of such violations.

1001.13 Record Keeping

- A. The Ohio Fire Code 104.6.2 states that the fire code official shall keep a record of each inspection made, including notices and orders issued, showing the findings and dispositions of each.
- B. All fire company level inspections shall be documented in the Fire Inspection Module.
- C. A copy of the Fire Inspection Module (FIM) Users Manual is located on the S-drive in the Fire Inspection Module Folder.

1001.15 Life Safety Inspections

- A. Company Commanders shall set up a life safety inspection program for all places of assembly, providing for life safety inspections not less than once every six months.

A more frequent inspection shall be based on the history of violations and knowledge of gatherings. The Company Commander shall cause the more frequent inspection with the approval of the District Chief.
- B. Life safety inspections shall be conducted in places of assembly during hours of highest occupancy.
- C. Life safety inspections shall not be an in-depth, or detailed inspection, but a limited inspection with particular attention given to overcrowding, means of egress decorations, etc.
- D. All Life Safety Inspections shall be documented in the Fire Inspection Module.
- E. District Chiefs shall supervise the Life Safety Inspection Program. Company Commanders shall submit a F-47 quarterly on January 1st, April 1st, July 1st and October 1st, stating the status of this program for their inspection district.
- F. The Code Enforcement Bureau of the Fire Prevention Division shall deliver to the responsible Fire Company the Maximum Occupancy Signs along with two copies of a Form 120 for delivery to the premise. This sign will list the maximum number and name and/or room of the occupancy. The Company Commander shall see that the sign is delivered to the "Place of Assembly." The responsible person for the place of assembly shall sign both copies of the Form 120. The fire company shall keep one copy on file. The second copy shall be returned to the Code Enforcement Bureau of the Fire Prevention Division.
- G. Life safety inspections of churches shall be performed prior to services.

Do not enter the sanctuary during services. "Sanctuary" is defined as the area of the church where worship services are conducted. This means the church proper where worshipers are seated during services. It is acceptable to open a rear door

and look inside, but DO NOT ENTER.

Inspectors are to be as discreet as possible, take no overt action during services and resolve any problems before or after service, privately with the church official, unless an observed violation or situation constitutes a severe and immediate threat to life.

Most churches have fixed seating. Simply advise the church officials prior to inspecting that no persons shall be seated in aisles or stand in aisles due to lack of seating available during services because it is prohibited by law. This will ease, and probably solve the problem.

1001.17 Right to Know Inspection

- A. Right to Know Inspections are to be conducted with the regular inspection of the property at intervals not exceeding one year.
- B. Occupancies storing, using or manufacturing regulated substances listed in CFPC 1247 must comply with the Right to Know provisions.
- C. The Occupational Safety and Health Administrations regulatory authority preempts C.F.P.C. Chapter 1247, except for the following sections:

Section 1247-09, All containers of regulated substances in one gallon containers, or larger, or its gaseous or solid equivalent must be labeled, unless exempted, as specified in this section, and Sections 1247-5 and 1247-31.

Section 1247-15, Employers manufacturing, using, or storing a toxic or hazardous substance shall submit material safety data sheets, to the Fire Department if requested.

Section 1247-17. Employers shall submit a list of locations where toxic and hazardous substances are used, manufactured or stored to the Fire Department. These documents and the information contained therein are not for public viewing or dissemination. Public records request shall be forwarded to the Environmental Crimes Unit.

- D. The Environmental Crimes Unit (ECU) shall collect and maintain all chemical information electronically within the Cameo database supported by the USEPA and place it on the S drive. Company officers and inspectors should access Cameo and query facilities within their districts for inspection and pre-planning purposes.

1001.19 Permits

- A. An inspection for permit purposes is part of a regular fire inspection, but with additional emphasis placed on the hazard area being permitted.
- B. While inspecting an area requiring a permit, complete application Form 15. The applicant or responsible individual must sign the permit application. The Form 15

CONDUCTING FIRE PREVENTION INSPECTIONS

Section 1001

Rev. 3/15

Page 6 of 10

can be submitted through department mail or the responsible party can mail the Form 15 to the Cincinnati Fire Department, Fire Prevention Division, 430 Central Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45202.

- C. Permit renewals will be forwarded to companies. When receiving such a renewal an inspection must be made and forms forwarded to Fire Prevention within 30 days. Renewal applications will be stamped "Annual Renewal" and must also be signed.
- D. Political subdivisions of the federal, state, county, local governments and schools are exempt from fees. Exemptions should be noted under comments.
- F. Copies of permit applications and renewals are filed at the Fire Prevention Bureau. The Fire Company receives a copy of the permit after it has been issued.
- G. Permits are not issued until the fees have been paid. Operating without a permit is a violation of the CFPC 1201-57.

1001.21 Inspection Practices with Reference to Gas Supply Equipment and Gas Burning Appliances

A number of serious gas leaks and gas explosions have occurred. Some of them required much of our time and work to resolve. Gas leaks and explosions are serious. They not only present great danger to citizens and their property, but also to us, who must respond to the scene, and remain, until the emergency is cleared. The best approach is to detect unsafe conditions and correct them before leaks develop.

Experience has shown that good inspections result from a combination of knowledge of pertinent laws, regulations, hazards, an inspector's ability to recognize conditions that can cause a fire or explosion, and conditions that contribute to the spread of fire.

A good visual inspection of all exposed parts of gas meters, piping, connections, appliances, pressure regulators, valves, street stops, and any other part of the gas supply system will help to find defects before they cause trouble. In any case where you have reason to believe that any part of the system is improper, you shall issue a corrective order to the proper person and notify Duke Energy.

Street stops must be accessible to shut off gas flow. When stop cannot be located, or if the valve is not accessible due to position, debris, stones, etc submit a Form 47 to the Fire Prevention Bureau listing the address and condition.

All parts of the gas supply system must be accessible for servicing and emergencies. Storage of combustible materials, under gas meters, is prohibited. Brooms, mops, etc. shall not be in same enclosure with built in gas furnaces.

Gas piping should be properly supported. Examine piping for possible defects.

This piping shall be sealed at the basement wall to prevent entry of gas or water. For complete protection, any opening in basement walls, including cracks, should be sealed to prevent gas from entering the building that may be escaping from street main leaks. Make these recommendations to building occupants and owners.

Where there is evidence of poor workmanship on gas piping and appliances, issue orders for corrections, recommending that a competent person perform the work. Gas piping

should not be installed into or through air ducts, clothes chutes, chimneys, gas vents, ventilating ducts, dumb waiters, or elevator shafts.

When gas burning appliances have been disconnected from gas feed lines, the ends shall be closed with threaded plugs or caps, in addition to shutting off the control valve for the pipe.

Examine basement drains, both for smell of gas and for water level. Advise occupants that water in the drain traps of infrequently used basement floor drains, showers and laundry tubs often evaporates and permits gases to enter the building from the sewer system. Running a little water, at regular intervals, into the drains, will prevent this from happening.

Good inspection work detects conditions that can cause fires and explosions.

1001.23 Inspecting Gas Burning Equipment and Piping

- A. Inspector will see that every gas-fueled appliance has a gas shut off controlling gas flow to that appliance.
- B. Heating appliances, vent pipes, and energy saving devices must be approved by testing laboratories, (Underwriters' Laboratories, etc.) as recognized by the Cincinnati Buildings and Inspections Bureau, and permits obtained for their installation.

Permits must be obtained from the Buildings and Inspections Bureau for all heating installations adaptations, energy savers, and new and reconstructed chimneys. If the owner or person responsible has any doubts, they should request the proper information from the Buildings and Inspections Bureau.
- C. Gas meter equipment shall be checked for stability and accessibility. Storage under gas meter equipment is not permitted.

1001.25 Unvented Gas Space Heaters

- A. The Cincinnati Ohio Basic Building Code has been modified to allow the sale and installation of approved unvented gas space heaters for use in one-family and two-family dwellings. These unvented gas space heaters must be equipped with oxygen depletion sensors and listed in accordance with ANSI standards.
- B. Unvented kerosene heaters are prohibited in occupancies in use groups A, E, I, R-1, R-2, R-3, and R-4 (there is an exception for 1 and 2 family dwellings). There are other restrictions listed in Ohio Fire Code 603.4 that must be followed.

1001.27 Unsafe Heating Appliances

- A. Any heat-producing device or appliance found to be defective or in violation of code requirements must have a violation notice issued per Ohio Fire Code 603.8.

-
- B. If compliance is not obtained or use of the appliance/device is not discontinued the person, firm or agent shall be charged with Failure to comply and violation of Ohio Fire Code 603.8.1 The Code Enforcement Bureau of the Fire Prevention Division shall file charges. *(The written order to discontinue use is essential to proceed with enforcement).*

1001.29 Overlapping Areas of Operation Between Building and Fire Department

Cooperation in overlapping areas of inspection between the Property Maintenance Code Enforcement (Building) and Fire Department requires continual attention and coordination to accomplish our common goal of public safety.

The Fire Department is charged with the elimination of fire hazards, and the maintenance and upkeep of fire protection appliances. It is also charged with the responsibility to recognize and refer to the proper agency, conditions affecting safety and health.

1001.31 Security Coverings For Fire Escapes

- A. Written orders shall be issued for removal of all permanent security coverings attached to windows leading to fire escapes Cincinnati Fire Prevention Code 1219.63.

1001.33 Inspection of Day Care Centers, Group Homes and Other Care Facilities

- A. When a new day care, group home, or other care facility excluding foster homes, is licensed to operate, the Fire Specialist responsible for day care centers will inspect the new facility and establish the fire evacuation plan, place the fire extinguishers, and make sure the facility is in compliance with applicable codes. The Fire Specialist will notify the fire company responsible for the inspection of the new facility relaying inspection date and any conditions that the company fire inspector should be aware of.
- B. When an existing day care, group home, or other care facility requests an inspection for the purpose of completing and signing a fire inspection report, the fire company responsible for that inspection shall conduct the fire inspection and complete the licensing agency's fire inspection report. Along with the completed agency's fire inspection report, the inspector shall provide a copy of the Fire Departments Inspection Form. The request from an outside agency for the inspection and completing the agency's fire inspection report will be made by phone to the Code Enforcement Bureau of the Fire Prevention Bureau; the request will be forwarded to the fire company responsible for the inspection on an inspection request Form 107.

An outside agency's fire inspection report will be at the facility to be inspected. These reports most generally come in two styles. One style is self explanatory and only requires a date of inspection and a signature. The other style is a

detailed check off form. This detailed form can be completed by marking the information needed on the fire evacuation plan and the question "Is the facility reasonably free from conditions hazardous to the safety of children and approved as such?" The inspector is to make sure the name and address of the facility are properly filled out. These are the only questions the inspector is required to answer when completing the detailed style fire inspection report for an outside agency.

In all cases, the fire inspection report for an outside agency will be on the premises of the facility to be inspected. Do not remove the agency's fire inspection report from the facility. Leave the fire inspection report with the owner or manager of the facility until all violations are corrected. Sign the agency's fire inspection report only after all violations are corrected and the inspection is approved. In most cases, the agency's fire inspection report will have a copy for the fire inspector. Take the fire inspector's copy and file in the Fire Company's files. This file will allow the fire company to have knowledge of all group homes and care facilities in the fire company's inspection district.

1001.35 Administrative Policy on Outdoor Assembly Events

- A. To ensure fire and life safety of patrons during outdoor assembly events, the Fire Department will enforce the following administrative policy as determined under the Cincinnati Fire Prevention Code, Sections 1201-17 and 1201-29.

Any outdoor assembly event having any cooking device in use and over 100 persons in attendance at any one time or limited access and/or restricted egress shall be reported to the Fire Chief by the organizing sponsor at least 14 calendar days prior to the event.

When the outdoor assembly event involves less than 3 cooking devices or less than 1,000 persons in attendance at any one time, the Fire Chief may cause a fire and life safety inspection to be conducted by a certified fire inspector as deemed necessary.

When the outdoor assembly event involves 3 or more cooking devices and/or more than 1,000 persons in attendance at any one time, the Fire Chief shall cause the assembly site and open flame cooking devices to be inspected and violations corrected prior to the start of the event. The Fire Chief may cause fire inspections as deemed necessary during the event. If the Fire Chief deems that a continuous fire monitor is necessary for the safety of the patrons, the organizing sponsor shall pay the cost of the monitor(s).

In all outdoor assembly events, the Fire Chief shall determine how many monitors are necessary and what rank and specialty knowledge is needed to ensure the safety of the patrons.

It is the responsibility of each Company Commander to be aware of events in their first in running area concerning outdoor events.

Each Company Commander is responsible for informing the management of establishments in their inspection district that would be likely to sponsor an

outdoor event or festival, of Fire Department's policy and requirements. This can be done in the course of your routine inspection program.

1001.37 School and Recreation Center Inspections

- A. A copy of a Fire Inspection Form is required to be given to all schools and recreation centers for submitting for State and Federal funding. The fire inspector shall be required to deliver a copy of the Fire Inspection to the administrator of these premises.

The procedure for handling fire code violations is outlined in 1003.05B.

1001.39 Vacant Premises

- A. Per the Ohio Fire Code 311.2.1 all exterior openings and interior openings accessible to other tenants or unauthorized persons shall be boarded, locked, blocked or otherwise protected to prevent entry by unauthorized individuals. Any vacant building found unsecured shall be reported to the Fire Prevention Bureau. The Fire Prevention Bureau will refer the building to Property Maintenance Code Enforcement to initiate a barricade case.