



Building Codes Enforcement

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SOG 400.1	Related Policies: SOG Title: Fire Inspections
<p><i>This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.</i></p>	
<p>Applicable SC Statutes: Applicable SC Code of Regulations:</p>	
<p>OSHA:</p>	
<p>NFPA Standard:</p>	
<p>Date Implemented: 10/26/18</p>	<p>Date of last revision :</p>

PURPOSE: In performing the role as fire inspector you can impact the safety of more people than in most other department operations. The fire inspection is designed to ensure that existing buildings have properly maintained and operating fire safety features to improve the life safety of occupants. The fire inspection program helps us meet our mission statement. As an inspector in the field, when meeting with the owner/occupant of the building you are educating the public in the proper maintenance and testing of their building life safety systems. The inspection program ultimate goal is to create a safe environment for the citizens of the community and for fire fighters that must respond. Through properly operating fire detection, suppression, and notification systems the emergency responders may have a great deal of fire problem detected and controlled in the early stages.

SCOPE: The fire inspection program is to be carried out by the Chief Fire Marshal or designee with assistance from the fire department when necessary. The annual inspection goal for the department is all commercial structures within the Town of Moncks Corner.

To meet this goal the inspections can include:

- Annual fire inspections

- Re-inspections conducted for code corrections.
- Special inspection requested from businesses
- Business License Inspections
- Self-inspection forms sent with the business license renewal
- Self-inspection forms distributed with new business license applications

RESPONSIBILITY: The Chief Fire Marshal assumes overall responsibility for the fire safety inspection program. The Chief Fire Marshal is responsible for developing an annual fire inspection schedule. The Chief Fire Marshal is responsible for scheduling and conducting the inspections, establishing timetables for re-inspection and final inspections. The Fire Inspector is responsible for reviewing the individual inspection files for content, legibility, and completeness and for entering all pertinent information into the applicable computer program. Fire inspectors are responsible for conducting, completing and updating pre fire surveys, and forwarding this information to the fire marshal.

PROCEDURE: Fire safety inspection should be well planned to insure that the business operations of the owner/occupant are not interfered with or inconvenienced. The type of occupancy being inspected should be evaluated for determining the time of day to conduct the inspection. For example, a restaurant should be inspected early in the morning prior to the lunch preparations or mid- afternoon after the lunch crowd has subsided. Other businesses may request a different time to inspect when you arrive if they are very busy. Our goal is to get the inspection completed with little inconvenience and to create a positive relationship with the owner / occupant.

The inspection should be thorough and the inspection report completed accurately. Contact information will be reviewed during the inspection and forwarded to the Fire Department. Any changes shall be noted and forwarded to the Fire Department so that the drawing can be updated accordingly. Some items to be checked during the inspection:

- Inspection/test dates recorded for detection, suppression and alarm systems shall be recorded.
- Sprinkler inspection has to include the condition of the heads; paint on the fusing elements or still covered with tape or paper resulting from painting operations.
- Test all batteries on exit lights and emergency lights, smoke detectors etc.
- Inspect fire extinguishers for annual inspection date.
- Take good field notes on the problem identified and its exact location.
- Mark each item on the inspection form "NA", if it is not applicable.
- Assembly occupancies: restaurants, clubs, auditoriums etc., shall have occupant loads limit posted at the front entrance. If they have not been issued an occupancy load limit and sign one will be provided.
- Check for locked or blocked exits and ease of operation.

- Check for aisle space and clearances.
- Check for excessive extension cord use.
- Check for accumulation of combustible waste.
- Check for powered industrial trucks (electric or LPG powered)
- Check for evidence of smoking in unapproved areas such as assembly occupancies, warehouses, areas where combustible materials are stored or handled.
- Check for vehicle impact protection for areas that store LPG.
- And all other fire related hazards that represent a life hazard.
- Fire code violations shall be researched using the current adopted edition of the applicable codes and ordinances.
- Whenever code violations are found they shall be re-inspected in a timely manner by the same inspector who conducted the original inspection. If the original inspector is not available another qualified inspector may conduct the re-inspection.

CORRECTION TIME LIMITS FOR CODE VIOLATIONS SHALL BE AS FOLLOWS:

- Thirty (30) calendar days for most common violations.
- Ten (10) calendar days shall be used for violations that are found with sprinkler system, alarm system, hood system, or detection systems.
- Immediate correction shall be used for locked exits and/or egress blockage or other violations that creates a life safety issue.
- Time limits are subject to change at the discretion of the Chief Fire Marshal.
- All re-inspections will be scheduled in Meritage as part of the end of day procedures.
- The re-inspections should be accomplished on the day due, in order to re-enforce the inspection program credibility. Assistance for re-inspection from staff can be requested.
- Re-inspection fees shall be applied in accordance with the Town ordinance for fees.
- If a conflict arises in interpretation or from application of the code between a business and the inspector the business may appeal to the Chief Fire Marshal.
- If the business owner is not satisfied with the decision of the Chief Fire Marshal they may request an appeal in accordance with the Town ordinance.
- If after re-inspection and no corrective action has been taken by the owner/occupant, the will notify the Chief Fire Marshal via email for follow-up.

NIGHT INSPECTIONS

- Night inspections shall be conducted in even months.
- Night inspections shall be conducted after 1700 hours.
- Night inspections shall focus primarily on public assembly type buildings such as but not limited to: establishments that serve alcohol, have bands, restaurants, gymnasiums, auditoriums, etc.
- The night inspections should focus on overcrowding, occupancy signs posted (if not posted make note to call fire marshal), blocked or locked exit doors and exit access (correct during visit), exit signs not illuminated (allow 10 days).
- An inspection report is required on all night inspections, even if no violations were found.
- Include the time the inspection was conducted and what time you arrived and departed the business. Notify the Chief Fire Marshal of any discrepancies found.

FIREWORKS DISPLAY INSPECTIONS

- The Chief Fire Marshal or designee shall conduct inspections of all permitted fireworks displays within the corporate limits of the Town of Moncks Corner.
- The Chief Fire Marshal or his designee shall be present during all permitted fireworks displays within the corporate limits of the Town of Moncks Corner.