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Commercial Building Inspections

During commercial building inspections, safety infractions are often uncovered which can jeopardize the well-being of occupants and visitors. These lapses in safety can expose businesses to liability and put individuals at risk. Implementing safety measures, like those outlined below, can significantly enhance the safety and security of your commercial property. For questions regarding protecting your building against potential hazards, please contact our fire prevention bureau at 636-458-2100.

Common commercial building inspection violations include:

Commercial Kitchen –

- Commercial hood should be clean of grease and in working order.
- Grease producing cooking equipment shall be located under commercial hood and in line with suppression nozzles.
- Commercial hood suppression system has current 6-month inspection tag.
- Commercial kitchens that have grease producing cooking equipment must have 1-K-type fire extinguisher mounted in an accessible location within proximity of the hood.

Electrical –

- Extension cords shall not be a substitute for permanent wiring, nor shall they be exposed to physical or environmental damage.
- Approved covers shall be provided for all electrical boxes. Open wiring splices shall be prohibited.
- Maintain at least 30"W x 36"D clearance in front of electrical service equipment.
- Discontinue use of non-approved multi-plug adapters, and limit overuse of multi-plug adapters

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Exits –

- All public exit doors must be unlocked during business hours or have panic or push paddle hardware.
- Remove difficult-to-use locks or latches on non-public doors which affect ease of egress during an emergency.
- Remove obstructions, combustible materials and/or flammable liquids from exits, exit enclosures, and from beneath non enclosed exterior stairways.
- Repair or maintain exit doors and hardware to operate properly.
- Remove combustible materials from beneath un-protected interior stairways.

Exit Lighting –

- Lighted exit signs are required to be always lit.
- Maintain battery backup emergency lighting for exits aisles, corridors, and stairways.

Fire Alarm Systems –

- Buildings which have required fire alarm systems must be maintained in proper working order, accessible and inspected annually by a qualified service company.
- Buildings with required fire alarm systems must be always monitored by a qualified alarm monitoring station.
- Buildings with fire sprinklers are required to have a monitored fire alarm system.

Fire Extinguishers –

- Provide minimum of 1 extinguisher size and type 2A10BC suitable for the hazard (1 fire extinguisher per 3000 SQFT, not more than 75 ft between extinguishers).
- Mount extinguishers at the proper height of 42"- 44" to top.
- Post signs indicating the location of extinguishers, if not readily visible.
- Portable fire extinguishers are due for annual maintenance and tagging or replacement every two to three years for light hazard occupancies.

Fire Protection Access and Equipment –

- Provide 4-inch high (minimum) address numbers of contrasting color to their background and visible from the street. (Front and rear door for multi-tenant centers).
- Maintain access to and operation of standpipes, sprinkler valves, fire hydrants, and other fire protection equipment.
- Provide and install protective caps or covers on fire department hose connections.

Fire Separations –

- Remove obstructions from fire doors and maintain to operate properly.

Housekeeping –

- Material susceptible to spontaneous ignition, such as oily rags, shall be stored in a listed disposal container.
- Storage of combustible waste is to be orderly and/or in approved containers and away from heat sources.
- Remove storage to at least 18" below level of sprinkler head deflectors.
- Maintain storage of combustibles 2 feet or more below the ceiling
- Remove combustible materials from boiler, mechanical and electrical equipment rooms.
- Dumpsters (larger than 1.5 cu. yards) shall not be placed within 5 feet of combustible walls, openings, or roof eave lines.
- Secure all compressed gas cylinders in an upright position against a support or in a cart. When not in use provide protective caps, chain or strap to wall, or another secure object.

Knox Box –

- Required on all buildings with fire sprinklers and buildings with monitored fire alarm systems.
- Current building keys required in Knox box, must provide access to buildings, exterior, interior, and mechanical room doors, and all other rooms secured. A single grand master key is preferred.

Liquids Flammable and Combustible –

- Storage in excess of 10 gallons shall be in approved liquid storage cabinets.
- Storage of less than 10 gallons shall be in approved containers.