

St. John's Regional Fire Department

Fire Safety Responsibilities for Building Owners and Property Managers





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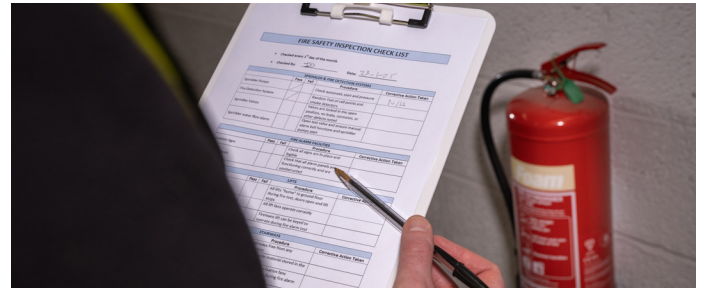
Introduction

Fire Safety Responsibilities for Building Owners and Property Managers

Fire safety is an important responsibility for everyone. The consequences of poor fire safety practices and a lack of emergency planning are especially serious in properties that house a large number of people.

In an effort to prevent fires and minimize the damage from fires when they occur, property managers are encouraged to develop and implement a Fire Safety Plan and a schedule of regular maintenance checks for all the fire safety equipment located within their building.

This booklet will aid property managers in developing a Fire Safety Plan and a maintenance schedule by informing them what checks are required on the various fire safety equipment and at what intervals. This booklet also provides owners/property managers with information on what to do should any of the fire safety equipment fail to operate.



What is a Fire Safety Plan?

A Fire Safety Plan is a detailed document designed to deal with all aspects of fire safety relating to a specific building or property. The document is intended to be a reference manual outlining the fire safety practices to be routinely used.

Every Fire Safety Plan should include:

- Emergency procedures to be used in case of fire, including: sounding the alarm, notifying the fire department, provisions for access for firefighting, instructing occupants on procedures to be followed when the fire alarms sounds, and evacuating endangered persons;
- Instructions on ways to prevent fire and methods to control fire hazards throughout the building;
- Information about the appointment, organization and instruction of designated supervisory staff and other occupants, including their related fire safety duties and responsibilities;
- The method and frequency of conducting fire drills;
- Detailed maintenance procedures for fire protection systems and building features;
- The identification of alternate fire safety measures in the event of a temporary shutdown of fire protection equipment or systems, so that occupant safety can be assured;
- Instructions and schematic diagrams describing the type, location and operation of building fire emergency systems.



Evacuation Diagrams

What are they?

Evacuation Diagrams are typical diagrams that provide instructions to occupants and visitors to your building highlighting exit facilities and other fire safety provisions for their use. They should include an orientation tool, "You Are Here", as well as directional arrows leading to all exits. Diagrams are then permanently affixed to the wall near elevators and exits. A copy also needs to be provided to the occupants as part of their fire safety instructions.

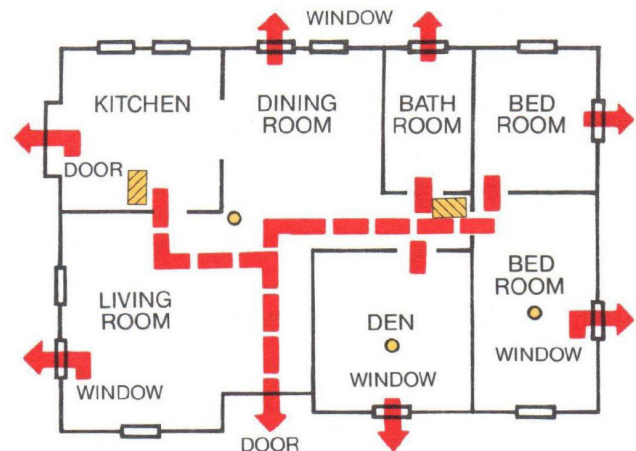


What part of the building must be shown?

Basements, parking garages, and floor plans of all levels including typical floors, penthouses, mezzanines and partial floor levels, roof plans, building sections may also be necessary. Unit layouts are required for business and commercial buildings.

Benefits of Implementing a Fire Safety Plan

- Reduces the incidence of fire
- Promotes fire hazard identification and elimination
- Promotes employee and tenant safety and awareness
- Coordinated building and fire department resources during a fire emergency
- Enhances Fire Code compliance





Fire Protection Measures

Please find below brief descriptions of fire protection systems, which may be present in existing buildings:

Automatic Sprinkler System

An automatic sprinkler system is a series of underground and overhead piping designed in accordance with fire protection engineering standards. The system is connected to a water supply such as a storage tank or municipal water supply. The system includes a controlling valve, a series of sprinkler heads and a device for actuating an alarm when the system is in operation and is usually activated by heat from fire, thereby discharging water over the fire area.

Emergency Lighting

Emergency lighting ensures that exits, corridors and principal routes providing access to exits are illuminated in the event of loss of electrical power to the building.

Exits

An exit is that part of a means of egress that leads from the floor area it services to a public thoroughfare or to an approved open space. Walls, floors, doors or other means provide a protected path necessary for occupants to proceed with reasonable safety to the outside.

Fire Alarm System

The purpose of a fire alarm system is to alert all the occupants of the building that a fire emergency exists, so that such occupants may put the measures required by the Fire Safety Plan into practice.

All fire alarm systems shall be maintained in a fully operational condition at all times.



Smoke Alarms

Smoke alarms are a key part of a fire escape plan. When there is a fire, smoke spreads fast. Most injuries or deaths that occur from residential fires are because of the smoke, not the fire. Working smoke alarms give you early warning so you can get outside quickly.

If you are a property manager for a residential property:

- Install a smoke alarm inside each sleeping room, outside all sleeping areas, and on every level of the home.
- Advise the residents to test each alarm at least once a month, by pressing the test button, and replace the batteries at least twice a year. If you hear the smoke alarm “chirp” every so often it means the battery needs to be replaced immediately.
- Smoke alarms may also be hard-wired into the electrical system. These should have a battery back-up so they will still work if there is a power outage.
- For the best protection, have smoke alarms interconnected so when one sounds they all sound.
- Replace the smoke alarm when it reaches 10 years of age, or sooner if it malfunctions.
- If anyone is deaf or hard of hearing, you should consider purchasing flashing or vibrating smoke alarms.
- If your smoke alarm goes off when you are cooking and there is no fire, wave a towel under it to disperse the smoke and stop the alarm. Never remove the battery or take the smoke alarm down. Consider getting a smoke alarm that has a “Hush” button that allows you to silence the alarm in the event of a false alarm.



Fire Department Access

Fire department access allows fire fighters and their equipment to gain access to the building. Vehicles parked in Fire access routes, excessive vegetation, snow and other forms of obstructions to access fire hydrants, and fire department connections are not permitted by the National Fire Code. Maintaining Fire Department Access is an ongoing matter. In addition, access into a building requires consideration (e.g. keyholder available through preplanning)

Portable Extinguishers

Portable extinguishers are intended as a first aid measure to cope with fire of limited size. The basic types of fire are Class A, B, and C. Portable extinguishers are rated for the corresponding class of fire.

Standpipe and Hose Systems

A standpipe system is an arrangement of piping, valves and hose outlets installed in a building or structure in such a manner that water can be discharged through a hose and nozzle for extinguishment of fire. The system is connected to a water supply, which provides an adequate supply of water to the hose.

Kitchen Fire Suppression System and Kitchen Exhaust

Kitchen Fire Suppression Systems are specifically designed, tested, and approved/listed to provide fire protection for commercial kitchen cooking appliances, hoods, and ducts. These are classified as wet chemical pre-engineered fire suppression systems. The exhaust is system of ductwork that mechanically expels cooking vapours from the building.

Responsibilities of Owner/Property Manager

1. Establishment of emergency procedures to be followed at the time of an emergency.
2. Appointment and organization of designated supervisory staff and alternates to carry out fire safety duties.
3. Instruction of supervisory staff and other occupants so that they are aware of their responsibilities for fire safety.
4. Assuring maintenance of building facilities provided for safety of the occupants.
5. Provision of alternative measures for safety of occupants during shutdown of fire protection equipment.
6. Assuring that checks, tests and inspections, as required, are completed on schedule and that records are retained.





Responsibilities of Maintenance Personnel

The maintenance personnel are responsible for daily, weekly, and monthly, bi-annual, and annual maintenance as required under the Fire Code of all fire safety equipment located within their site. Maintenance includes visual inspections and written verification in the building's Fire Safety Log and immediate notification of equipment malfunction or shutdown to their Owner/Property Manager, or staff person on duty, as well as the Fire Department.

1. Keep fire separation doors closed at all times – stairwell, hallway, laundry room, electrical/mechanical room.
2. Keep stairways, landings, hallways, passageways and exits, both inside and outside, clear of obstructions at all times. (Including snow and ice.)
3. Do not permit combustible materials to accumulate in any part of a stairway or other means of egress, or electrical, mechanical, service room.
4. Keep access roads, hydrants, and fire department connections clear and accessible at all times for Fire Department use.
5. Have a working knowledge of the fire alarm system and how to reset it. The St. John's Regional Fire Department will not reset fire alarm panels.
6. Maintain the fire alarm system and other fire protection equipment in good operation at all times. Record this information in the Fire Safety Log.
7. In the event of any shutdown of fire protection equipment, e.g. fire alarm system, sprinkler, standpipe, notify the Fire Department and implement a fire watch.

During an emergency situation Maintenance Personnel shall:

1. Ensure the fire alarm has been activated.
2. Notify the Fire Department at 911 and inform them of the emergency condition.
3. Supervise the evacuation of the occupants.
4. Upon the arrival of the Fire Department, inform the Fire Official regarding conditions in the building and co-ordinate the efforts of supervisory staff with those of the Fire Department.
5. Provide access and vital information to the Fire Department (i.e. keys for access to suites, service rooms, elevators, etc.)
6. Reset the fire alarm only when directed to do so by the Fire Department.
7. Contact the monitoring company (if applicable) and advise that fire systems have been reset.

Definitions

Check: means visual observation to ensure the device or system is in place and is not obviously damaged or obstructed.

Inspect: means physical examination to determine that the device or system will apparently perform in accordance with its intended function.

Test: means the operation of a device or system to ensure that it will perform in accordance with its intended operation or function.





Fire Alarm System

- Check to ensure fire alarm system is fully operational at all times
- Check AC power light daily
- Check for trouble signal daily
- Report trouble to alarm maintenance company and have them come in ASAP to repair
- Implement a fire watch when the alarm is showing trouble or not functioning for some other reason
- Have system inspected at least annually
- Replace smoke and heat detectors as required
- Check detectors at least monthly and report any problems to the alarm maintenance company and have them come in ASAP to repair
- If renovations are done, ensure there are adequate smoke/heat detectors for the renovated space



Sprinkler System

- Check to ensure sprinkler system is fully operational at all times
- Report any problems to the sprinkler maintenance company and have them come in to repair ASAP
- Have system inspected at least annually
- Check sprinkler heads monthly for any sign of damage or dirt
- Have damaged/dirty sprinkler heads repaired/cleaned and/or replaced
- Maintain 18 inches of clearance around sprinkler heads

Standpipe and Hose Cabinets

- Check to ensure standpipe system is fully operational at all times
- Report any problems to the standpipe maintenance company and have them come in to repair ASAP
- Have system inspected at least annually
- Check hoses in cabinets to ensure they are hung properly
- Check to ensure hose wrench is available in the cabinet
- Check to ensure hose cabinets are unobstructed at all times

Hydrants

- Check to ensure hydrants are clear and accessible at all times
- Have hydrant inspected at least annually
- Report any damage to the hydrant to the maintenance company ASAP

Evacuation Plan

- Implement and maintain the evacuation plan. Review the plan at least annually to see if updates are required. e.g. change in emergency contact information, change in any occupants with mobility impairments
- Ensure each unit receives a copy of the evacuation plan. This plan shall include the location of alarms, egress paths and action to be taken when there is a fire in your unit and when the alarm activates.
- Provide a copy of the evacuation plan to each unit annually or when tenancy changes.
- Conduct fire drills at least once per year.

Hallways/Stairwells

- Check to ensure there is no storage
- Check that they are unobstructed at all times



Exits

- Check to ensure all exits are clear and unobstructed, both inside and outside, at all times, and are well lit
- Check to ensure exits are free of snow and/or ice at all times
- Check to ensure exits are cleared to a public way
- Test to ensure exit doors are easy to open with minimal force

Emergency Lights

- Test at least monthly
- Repair and/or replace any that are not working

Exit Signs

- Must be operable in AC and DC mode
- Test DC mode at least monthly to ensure battery is functioning
- Check for burned out bulbs in AC mode at least weekly, replace as needed

Hallway/Stairwell Doors

- Check to ensure doors are kept closed at all times unless they are tied into the fire alarm system
- Check to ensure they are self-closing and latching. Repair any doors with missing/broken self-closures and any doors that are not fully latching

Electrical/Mechanical Rooms and Laundry Rooms

- Check to ensure there is no storage as storage is not permitted
- Check to ensure doors are closed at all times

Fire Extinguishers

- Installed in hallways and/or dwelling units
- Inspected annually by a qualified professional
- Check the gauge at least monthly to ensure the needle is still located within the green section
- Check to ensure extinguishers are unobstructed at all times
- Check for any signs of physical damage and that the pin is in place

General

- Check to ensure lint traps and area behind dryers are free of lint buildup and other combustible debris.
- Check to ensure dryer hoses are still connected.
- Check for any holes in ceilings or walls, or missing ceiling tiles. Repair/replace to maintain fire separation.
- Check to ensure all regular lighting is in good working order so means of egress is illuminated.
- Check to ensure dumpster is safe distance from building and lids are secured.
- Check storage areas for debris, improper storage of cleaners or chemicals.
- Check to ensure extension cords are not being used as a permanent source of power.
- Check to ensure if any space heaters are being used that they are approved by a certified testing agency such as UL or CSA, they are at least three feet away from anything that can burn and they are not plugged into an extension cord.



Fire Safety Maintenance Requirements

Daily (Not normally recorded in the Fire Safety Log)

1. **Fire Alarm System** – Check AC power lamp to ensure it is lit and that no trouble is indicated.
2. **Laundry Room** – Check to ensure dryers and area behind dryers are free of lint and dryer hoses are connected.
3. **Fire Doors** – Check to ensure they remain closed and they are not wedged or held open in any way. (Electrical/mechanical/service rooms, laundry rooms, hallway, and stairwell.)
4. **Extinguishers** – Check to ensure they are unobstructed.
5. **Dumpster** – Check to ensure lid is in place and dumpster is locked when not in use.
6. **Exits** – Check to ensure exits are cleared to a public way.



Weekly

1. **Sprinkler System** – Control valves that are not electrically supervised shall be checked to ensure they are in the open position and accessible.
2. **Sprinkler System** – Water supply pressure and system air or water pressure shall be checked to ensure the system is maintained at the required operating pressure.
3. **Sprinkler Cabinet** – Check to ensure spare sprinkler heads are located in the cabinet along with a sprinkler wrench.
4. **Electrical/Mechanical/Service Rooms** – Check to ensure there is no storage in them.
5. **Breeches in Fire Separation** – Check to ensure there are no holes in walls or ceilings, or ceiling tiles missing. Repair as necessary.

Monthly

1. **Portable Extinguishers** – Check to ensure there is no physical damage, pin is in place, pressure is good on the gauge, and inspection date is current.
2. **Emergency Lights** – Test batteries and make repairs as necessary.
3. **Exit Signs** – Check to ensure they are illuminated and test to ensure they illuminate in DC mode. Repair as necessary.
4. **Exit Doors** – Test (physically open) all doors forming part of a means of egress (any hallway, stairwell or exterior doors) to ensure they are operable. Repair as necessary.
5. **Fire Doors** – Test all doors forming part of a fire separation (electrical/mechanical/service rooms, laundry rooms, hallway, and stairwell) to ensure they self-close and latch. Repair as necessary.
6. **Hose Cabinets** – Inspect all hose cabinets to ensure proper hose position and that all equipment is in place and operable.
7. **Smoke Alarms** – Test each alarm at least once a month, by pressing the test button.



Bi-annually

1. **Smoke alarms** – Battery operated smoke alarms or those hard-wired with battery backup shall have the batteries replaced at least twice a year.
2. **Carbon monoxide alarms** – Battery operated carbon monoxide alarms or those hard-wired with battery backup shall have the batteries replaced at least twice a year.
3. **Kitchen suppression system** inspected by a qualified professional.
4. **Kitchen exhaust** inspected and cleaned by a qualified professional.



The SJRFD Fire Department is dedicated to the protection of life and property for our citizens, visitors, and businesses. We are confident that through education and awareness your property can be a fire safe facility.

Regular inspections by the SJRFD are performed to assess and mitigate potential fire- and life-safety hazards in buildings.

We believe that by working together, our regular inspections will greatly reduce the occurrence of injury and the impact of a fire in your property. The best way for you to prepare for your inspection is to follow the preventative measures that have been outlined in this booklet.

Annually

1. **Fire Alarm System** inspected by a qualified professional.
2. **Water Based Fire Protection Systems** (Sprinkler, Standpipe, Hose Cabinets, Hydrants) inspected by a qualified professional.
3. **Portable Fire Extinguishers** inspected by a qualified professional.
4. **Smoke alarms** shall be tested annually during the fire alarm inspection and after every change in tenancy.
5. **Carbon monoxide alarms** shall be tested annually during the fire alarm inspection and after every change in tenancy.
6. **Dryer ductwork** for common laundry rooms cleaned by a qualified professional.

Samples of Fire Safety Maintenance Logs



For more information please contact:

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Weekly	Week 1		Week 2		Week 3		Week 4		Initials	Action Taken if Not OK
Exit Signs All bulbs lit.	OK	Not OK	OK	Not OK	OK	Not OK	OK	Not OK		
Sprinkler System Control valves open, pressure ok, 18" clearance around heads and heads not damaged or dirty.	OK	Not OK	OK	Not OK	OK	Not OK	OK	Not OK		
Sprinkler Cabinet Spare heads and wrench in cabinet.	OK	Not OK	OK	Not OK	OK	Not OK	OK	Not OK		
Breeches in Fire Separation Check for holes in ceilings/walls or ceiling tiles missing.	OK	Not OK	OK	Not OK	OK	Not OK	OK	Not OK		
Storage in Electrical/Mechanical/Service Rooms No storage permitted.	OK	Not OK	OK	Not OK	OK	Not OK	OK	Not OK		

Monthly	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Initials
Fire Extinguishers No physical damage, pin in place, pressure ok, inspection date current.	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	
	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	
Emergency Lights Test batteries	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	
	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	
Exit Signs Check bulbs and test batteries.	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	
	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	
Exit Doors Open all doors in means of egress.	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	
	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	
Fire Separation Doors Test all doors to ensure self-closing and latching.	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	
	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	
Hose Cabinets Proper hose position and wrench.	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	
	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	Not OK	

Action Taken: _____

Annually	Tested and Inspected by a Qualified Agency		Certificate Received		Date	Initials
Fire Alarm	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Sprinkler	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Standpipe	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Hydrant	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Hose Cabinets	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Fire Extinguishers	Yes	No	Yes	No		