

Prepare for Fire
and Life Safety

Residential Occupancy Inspection Program



**City of Napa Fire
Department**
Fire Prevention Division
1600 First Street
Napa, CA 94559



Established 1906

Residential Occupancy Inspection Program

The City of Napa has adopted a program to improve our annual fire and life safety inspections at all properties containing three or more dwelling units, hotels, motels, lodging houses, bed and breakfast facilities, and congregate residences.

The fire department considers fire and life safety inspections at these types of occupancies to be a benefit to the owners/operators, their tenant and guests. The inspection also addresses unsafe conditions that could result in business interruptions. This brochure has been developed to answer many of the common questions regarding the Residential Occupancy Inspection Program.

How will this program benefit me?

Fire and life safety inspections are done to protect property owners and residents from the devastating effects of fire. By promoting a safe living environment in these types of occupancies, the chance for fire decreases. Fire can kill, disable, destroy property and disrupt lives. According to the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) seventy-nine percent (412,500) of the 524,000 structure fires reported in 2006 occurred in residential properties, including homes, hotels, motels, rooming houses and dormitories; 76% (396,000) occurred in homes. (NFPA uses the term "home" to include one- and two family dwellings, apartments and manufactured housing.) Residential structure fires rose 4% in 2006 from the 381,000 reported in 2005. **Four of every five fire deaths resulted from Residential structure fires.** Eighty percent (80%) of the 3,245 civilian fire deaths reported in 2006 were caused by residential structure fires.



Fires in residential occupancies can have a devastating effect on life and property.

Are these inspections required?

Yes. These inspections must be conducted annually for all properties containing three or more dwelling units, hotels, motels, lodging houses, bed and breakfast facilities, and congregate residences. The California Health and Safety Code, Section 13146.2 (a) mandates that the inspections be completed annually while the California Health and Safety Code, Section 13146.2 (b) provides the City legal authority to charge property owners to recover reasonable costs for providing these annual inspections.

Important answers to some common questions.....

When will my property be inspected?

Inspections are conducted Monday through Friday during the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. Each property is inspected at approximately the same time of year. Large occupancies may be contacted to arrange inspection dates and times in an effort to ensure access to fire system components and facility personnel responsible for their maintenance.

The inspection process...

An initial inspection will be conducted by a Fire Inspector. At the conclusion of the inspection a report detailing any violations that need correction will be mailed to the property owner. Violations shall be corrected by the property owner or their representative *immediately*. A 1st re-inspection will be conducted 30 days after the initial inspection. At this time individual violations will be cleared if corrective action has been taken. If violations still exist, a 2nd re-inspection will be required and additional inspection fees will be charged.

What will the Inspector look for?

A typical fire and life safety inspection at these type occupancies include checking for fire hazards as follows:

Access

- Fire lanes obstructions
- Property identification numbers
- Key box access and contents
- Utilities (gas and electrical service) access
- Hydrant access



Key boxes provide quick access for emergency responders during an emergency.

Exiting and Exit System Components

- Exit signs and lighting
- Exit access doors including hardware, function and fit
- Staircase and railing condition
- Hallway and/or corridor obstructions
- Security window bars and gates



Exit signs offer direction to tenants and guest during an emergency.

Fire Protection Equipment

- Fire alarm systems
- Fire sprinkler systems
- Fire extinguishers
- Fire protection system signage



Sprinklers, alarms, and extinguishers must be maintained.

Utilities (Gas and Electric)

- Utilities identification
- Clearance and access at meters
- Extension cords
- Wire condition and installation



Gas and Electric meters need to be labeled for quick shut off during an emergency.

Storage and Housekeeping

Common areas will be inspected for fire hazards such as:

- Excessive storage and clutter
- Hazardous materials storage
- Fire hazard clearance
- Vegetation management



Exit paths need to be clear for emergency exit and emergency responder access.

Will the inspector enter individual units?

Generally, inspectors will not examine the interior of units. However, if a renter is home, they may request the inspector to check their smoke detector. Inspectors may check smoke detectors in vacant units if the owner or manager is present and gives consent.

How can I prepare for my inspection?

- ◆ Your property should be maintained in good order. For example, common areas and exit hallways should be clear of stored items; laundry rooms kept clean; address and unit numbers clearly visible; exit signs well-maintained; and hydrants, fire sprinkler systems and utility valves kept clear of vegetation.
- ◆ Fire extinguishers must to be serviced and tagged annually by a certified contractor.
- ◆ Smoke detectors and batteries should be checked regularly.
- ◆ Any fire sprinkler or fire alarm system must be serviced annually. In addition, fire sprinkler systems must also be certified every five years.
- ◆ A self inspection handout is available at the Fire Prevention Division Office.

How much will this cost?

The fees vary according to the time required to complete the inspection and reflect the fee needed to recover the costs of the inspection. Some types of properties have on-site maintenance staff that is immediately available to correct deficiencies, while others require more frequent or in-depth inspections to ensure compliance with state code requirements.

Will I get a bill?

Yes. These fees will be invoiced to the property owner after the completion of the fire inspection process.

Where can I get more Info?

Additional information is available at the Fire Prevention Division Office located in the Community Services Building, 1600 First Street, Napa, Ca 94559. Additional information includes self inspection handouts, FAQ's, and a list of licensed Fire Protection Service Contractors.

If you have a question regarding the program, contact the Residential Inspection Program at 707-257-9590 .

