



ANN ARBOR FIRE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Procedures – 4.07 Fire Inspections



FIRE INSPECTIONS

Effective: November 12, 2021
 Scheduled Review: November 12, 2024
 Approved: Fire Chief Mike Kennedy

I. PURPOSE

The purpose fire inspections is to allow for the prevention of fires and the protection of persons and property from exposure to the dangers of fire and explosion; to require the razing, repair and alterations of buildings, and the clearing and improvement of premises which constitute a fire hazard or a menace to the peace, security or safety of persons or property; and to control the use and occupancies of such buildings and premises.

The Fire Prevention Bureau (FPB) shall document all occupancy inspections, complaints, and history. The Ann Arbor Fire Prevention Bureau shall attempt to conduct inspections on all required occupancy locations pursuant to the City of Ann Arbor Ordinance, while maintaining a fair cost recovery fee schedule for these services.

The City of Ann Arbor has adopted the International Fire Code (IFC), 2015 edition, as published by the International Code Council, including Appendices B, C, D, E, F, G, H, and I, except those sections and appendices amended, deleted, or added as provided in this chapter. (2) The IFC, together with the provisions of Chapter 111 of Title IX of the Ann Arbor City Code, shall be known as the Ann Arbor Fire Prevention Code, which regulates conditions hazardous to life and property from the standpoint of fire and explosion in the city and defines the fire marshal's scope of authority.

A rate schedule for permits, inspections, and violations is established by City Council.

II. INSPECTION FREQUENCY

The Fire Prevention Bureau will strive to inspect occupancies under the frequency listed in Chapter 111 of Title IX of the Ann Arbor City Code. Below are excerpts from the Chapter 111 of Title IX of the Ann Arbor City Code.

Structures shall be classified according to the occupancy classifications as defined in the International Fire Code. Periodic fire safety inspections by the fire marshal, or his/her designee, are required for structures annually, every two (2) years, or every three (3) years, depending on occupancy classification as provided below. Except as otherwise provided, the occupancy classifications specified below include all groups within the IFC occupancy classification. Where multiple use groups apply to a structure, the applicable period for inspection for the entire structure will be the period applicable to the use group that represents the greatest percentage of the total square footage of the structure.

Occupancy Classifications Requiring Annual Inspections:

- Assembly Group A
- Factory Industrial Group F
- High Hazard Group H
- Mercantile Group M
- Residential Group R (Group R-1 and Group R-2, only, as specified below).



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- Residential Group R-1: hotels, motels, and transient boarding houses, only.
- Residential Group R-2: dormitories, fraternities, and sororities, only.

Occupancy Classifications Requiring Inspections Every 2 Years:

- Business Group B
- Storage Group S

Occupancy Classifications Requiring Inspections Every 3 Years:

- Miscellaneous Group U.

The fire marshal, or his/her designee, shall have the authority to enter a structure at all reasonable times to conduct an inspection required under this section and as provided in the IFC.

- A. If the structure is occupied, entry will first be requested.
- B. If the structure is unoccupied, a reasonable effort will be made to locate the owner or other person having charge or control of the structure and entry will be requested.
- C. If entry is refused, the following steps will be taken by the fire marshal or his/her designee.
 - i. Leave the premises.
 - ii. Check BS&A for other parcels owned by the property owner(s) and forward this property list to the fire marshal (if designee is completing).
 - iii. The City Attorney's Office will mail a letter informing the owner(s) of the City of Ann Arbor requirements and possible pursuit of a warrant to conduct the inspection.
 - iv. City Attorney's Office will pursue a warrant if the property owner(s) are still denying entry.
 - v. The inspection and re-inspection will be conducted under the warrant.

Unless the violation presents an immediate threat to life safety or causes an imminent fire condition, the building owner / representative will be given a minimum of thirty (30) calendar days to mitigate the violation(s).

III. INSPECTION PROCEDURES

Initial Inspection - The involved property/occupancy initial inspection shall be scheduled according to available resources as established by Chapter 111 of Title IX of the Ann Arbor City Code.

If violations exist, a follow-up inspection shall be scheduled within five (5) City business days of the inspection / re-inspection. Usage of sick, vacation, or comp time is not included in this five (5) day limit. . Follow-up inspections shall be scheduled within sixty (60) calendar days. The period for a re-inspection may be reduced to thirty (30) calendar days for significant life safety hazards.



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First Re-Inspection - If identified violations have been resolved, no additional cost recovery fees will be assessed. If identified violation(s) still exist, the occupancy shall be posted. A “posting” is a sticker affixed to the front of the occupancy advising the public of non-compliance. Fees shall be assessed per the rate schedule set by City Council.

Second Re-Inspection - If identified violations have been resolved, no additional cost recovery fees will be assessed. If identified violations are still present; the occupancy shall be posted for a second time. Fees shall be assessed per the rate schedule set by City Council.

Third Re-Inspection - Upon completion of third re-inspection, if identified violations have been resolved no additional cost recovery fees shall be assessed, and the posting may be removed. If identified violations are still present; the involved appropriate property owner/occupancy representative shall be issued a citation for each outstanding violation. The involved fire inspector shall request a court appearance by marking the appropriate box located on a citation form. Fees shall be assessed per the rate schedule set by City Council.

Failure to Appear - At the fire inspector’s discretion, a failure to appear fee shall be invoiced to the property’s responsible party (owner) for any missed scheduled inspections.

IV. FIRE INSPECTOR EFFICIENCY

Fire inspectors are expected to inspect a minimum of 160,000 ft² monthly. Items such as multiple days spent on training, sick / vacation / comp off usage, fire investigation, or other assigned activities will be taken into consideration when reviewing monthly fire inspector efficiency. Re-inspections shall count towards this 160,000 ft² monthly minimum.

Fire inspectors shall complete and submit all reports and invoices within five (5) City business days of the inspection / re-inspection. Usage of sick, vacation, or comp time is not included in this five (5) day limit.

V. FIRE INSPECTOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Each fire inspector shall account for their work time in UltiPro daily. Work time will be broken down into the below categories. Proper time management is expected, and overtime is not authorized to complete this daily time categorization. Upon this SOP going into effect, UltiPro will be tried for one month, if experiences show that prior daily form worked better, the prior daily form will be used.

Fire Inspector Time Categorization

Inspection – Inspections, re-inspections, report writing, invoicing, Michigan Right to Know/SARA Title III, complaints

Investigation – Fire investigation, fire watch, hoarding

Administrative – Meeting, training, fire department or City function, other

Service – Hydrant flow test, Knox Box issue, alarm / fire suppression issue, site plan review

Community Engagement – Public engagement, fire safety presentation, community risk reduction



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Fire inspectors who have demonstrated a consistent record of exceeding the minimum efficiency requirement may be exempt from daily time categorization. The assistant chief assigned fire prevention shall make the determination on a per inspector basis.

The minimum to be considered exempt from daily logs is exceeding 160,000 ft² monthly on a consistent basis along with timely completion of reports, invoices, and re-inspections. The daily time categorization may be re-instituted if the inspector starts failing to meet the above described items.

VI. INSPECTION SCHEDULING

All scheduling will be entered on a shared Outlook calendar as directed by fire administration. Fire inspectors are responsible for entering vacation or other time off into their calendar at least two weeks out. If the fire inspector needs to take unscheduled time off within this two-week period, they are required to reschedule the inspections. If sick time is used, the management assistant will reschedule.

The fire prevention management assistant shall schedule and enter inspections on the shared calendar for fire inspectors. Priority of inspections will be driven by oldest outstanding inspections, complaints of possible severe life safety violations, and licensing requirements such as alcohol and marijuana. It is understood there is significant fluidity in the scheduling process.

ImageTrend is the authoritative source for occupancy contact information. Fire inspectors will update contact information as part of the inspection process.

Fire watch follow-up shall be completed or assigned by the fire marshal.

Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays are generally for inspections. Inspection times shall be between 0700-1100 and 1230-1430. To accommodate occupancy requests, inspections may occur outside of these times.

Mondays and Fridays are generally for re-inspections, reports, hydrant testing, Knox Box requests, additional inspections, and meetings.