



ANN ARBOR FIRE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Procedures – 4.07 Fire Inspections



FIRE INSPECTIONS

Effective: June 27, 2025
Scheduled Review: June 27, 2028
Approved: Fire Chief Mike Kennedy

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of 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), 2021 edition, as published by the International Code Council including Appendices B, C, D, F, H, I, J, K, and N. 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 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).
 - Residential Group R-1: hotels, motels, and transient boarding houses, only.



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- 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 re-inspection may be reduced to thirty (30) calendar days or less 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 accessed. 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 accessed. 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 accessed, 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 PRODUCTIVITY

The goal is for fire inspectors to inspect a minimum of 200,000 ft² monthly. A quarterly total of 600,000 ft² will account for schedule variations such as leave time and training. The tracked quarters are January – March, April – June, July – September, and October – December. Re-inspections count towards square footage requirement.

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. INSPECTION SCHEDULING

All scheduling will be entered on the inspectors a shared Outlook calendar. Fire inspectors are responsible for entering vacation or other time off into their calendar at least two weeks out. If the fire inspector takes any unscheduled sick, comp, or vacation time within this two-week period, the fire inspector is required to reschedule the cancelled inspections within three (3) City of Ann Arbor business days upon returning to work. Once rescheduled, the fire inspector shall send an email confirmation to the fire marshal, assistant chief assigned to fire prevention, and the management assistant.

The fire prevention management assistant shall schedule and enter inspections on the inspectors shared calendar for each fire inspector. 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.

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