



West Chester Fire Dept.

Fire Code Maintenance Handbook



Our Mission

- The West Chester Fire Department Loss Prevention Bureau is committed to the safety of its firefighters, and is dedicated to the preservation of life and the conservation of property for the residents and corporate citizens of West Chester Township through prevention education, fire safety inspections, code enforcement and fire scene investigations.



The Code

- The International Fire Code has been adopted as the West Chester Township Fire Prevention Code.



The Code

- Fire codes were developed and written from years of fire experience in the United States. These fire codes will not entirely keep a fire from occurring but fire incidents in inspected occupancies are much lower than those in occupancies that are not inspected.



Introduction

- Annually members of the West Chester Fire Department visit each business to provide a fire and life safety inspection. This inspection serves two important purposes:



Introduction

1. Conditions found violating the fire prevention code are identified and a notice of violation is issued to correct the violations found.



Introduction

2. Firefighters become acquainted with the businesses and building. In the event of a fire, prior knowledge of a building and special hazards are invaluable.



Inspectors

- All West Chester Fire and Life Safety Inspectors are certified by the state of Ohio and receive continuous education provided by the West Chester Fire Department training division.



Inspections

- Generally, inspections are preformed by uniformed firefighters assigned to engine companies and Loss Prevention Bureau staff.
- The bureau staff inspects all places of assembly and high hazards, and conducts all new acceptance testing.



General Precautions

- All commercial kitchen exhaust hood and duct systems shall be protected with an approved automatic fire suppression system.
- All hoods shall be cleaned of grease on a regular basis.
- All hood fire suppression systems shall be semi-annually serviced by an approved agency.



General Precautions

- Designated fire lanes shall be maintained clear at all times.
- Smoking shall be prohibited where conditions are such as to make smoking a hazard.
- Where smoking is permitted, a suitable non combustible ashtray shall be provided at convenient locations.



General Precautions

- All alternative heating devices shall be kept away from combustibles.
- Smoke detectors shall be tested and maintained on a regular basis.
- All exit and emergency lighting shall be tested and maintained on a regular basis.



General Precautions

- All private fire hydrants, fire department connections, and post indicator valves shall be maintained in working condition and free from obstructions.
- Post indicator valves shall be either chained in the open position or monitored by a fire alarm system.



General Precautions

- All buildings shall be clearly identified by posting an address on the building fronting the street. The address shall be visible from both directions, and numbers should be in numeric form four inches (4") high and one-half inch wide (0.5") in a color contrasting from their background.



General Precautions

- Storage in buildings shall be neat and orderly and stored away from heat and ignition sources.
- Storage shall be maintained two (2) feet below the ceiling in non sprinkled areas and 18 inches below sprinkler heads in sprinkled areas.
- Storage shall not be kept in any exit path or exit doors.



Emergency Planning & Preparedness

- All business should have an emergency plan for fire and severe weather.
- Once a plan is developed it should be maintained and practiced on a regular basis.



Exit Signs and Emergency Lighting



- All EXIT signs must be illuminated at all times that the building is occupied.
- Decorations, furnishings and storage shall not obscure or impair the visibility of EXIT signs or Emergency Lighting.
- All EXIT signs and Emergency lighting shall be tested and maintained to insure the operation of the backup system in case of power failure.



Exit Access

- No storage is allowed at any time in any exit corridor or exit pathway. The aisle to the exit shall not be narrower than the width of the exit door(s).
- Exit doors shall remain unlocked at all times the building is occupied. Any chains, bars, or other locking devices must be removed while the building is occupied.



Exit Access

- Double key deadbolts are prohibited. The inside lock shall be of the thumb latch type.
- Fire doors must be closed at all times unless held open by approved hold open devices. Other objects such as wood wedges used to hold open doors are prohibited.



Exit Access

- All interior doors held shut by a magnetic locking device shall fail open during any fire alarm condition or power failure.



Fire Alarm Systems



- Fire alarm systems are to be tested on an annual basis, and a record shall be kept of the test.
- Contact West Chester Communications @ 777-2230 immediately if the system is placed out of service for any reason. Please call back to confirm when the system has been restored.



Fire Alarm Systems

- Fire alarm pull stations must be visible and cannot be obstructed.
- If the fire alarm is showing any trouble or supervisory condition contact your fire alarm company to have it repaired.



Fire Extinguishers



- All businesses shall have at least one fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 2-A10-BC. More fire extinguishers may be needed due to area covered and the hazard protected.
- All fire extinguishers shall be mounted on the wall three to five feet from the floor.
- Fire extinguishers shall be visible and accessible at all times.



Fire Extinguishers

- All fire extinguishers are to be inspected and serviced by a qualified person on an annual basis.
- All fire extinguishers should be inspected monthly by office personnel to insure extinguisher placement and pressure gauge.



Fire Extinguishers

- The West Chester Fire Department encourages a fire extinguisher training course for all employees so everyone knows how to use one if the need arises.
- If you are interested in a fire extinguisher class, Please contact the West Chester Fire Department at 777-1133 from 8:00 to 4:30 Monday through Friday.



Fire Lanes

- Designated fire lanes are to be kept free of vehicles and obstructions at all times.



Sprinkler Systems



- All sprinkler systems shall be tested on an annual basis by a certified sprinkler contractor.
- Sprinkler systems shall be maintained to keep from freezing.
- There shall be no storage within 18 inches from the bottom of the sprinkler head.



Sprinkler Systems

- Keep the area clear around the sprinkler control valves.





Sprinkler Systems

- A supply of spare sprinkler heads and a sprinkler wrench shall be kept in a cabinet near the sprinkler control valves.
- Yard hydrants, Fire Department connections and post indicator valves shall be kept visible and not obstructed by shrubbery or vegetation.



Sprinkler Systems

- Post indicator valves shall be locked in the open position or monitored by a supervisory device.
- Fire department connections shall be identified with the address they protect.
- All connections shall have caps, and the swivels must rotate freely.



Electrical

- At least 30 inches of clearance must be maintained between electrical service equipment and storage.
- The use of multi-plug adaptors such as cube adaptors, unfused plug strips, or other unapproved devices are not permitted.
- Extension cords shall not be used in place of permanent wiring.



Electrical

- Extension cords shall not be affixed to structures, extended through walls, ceilings or floors, under the doors or floor coverings, and shall not be subject to weather damage, or physical impact.



Electrical

- Open junction boxes and open wiring splices shall be prohibited. Approved covers shall be provided for all switch and electrical outlet and junction boxes.
- All electrical motors shall be maintained free from excessive accumulations of oil, dirt, waste or debris.



Storage

- All storage is to be kept neat and orderly and shall not be stored within 24 inches of the ceiling and be kept 18 inches below sprinkler heads.
- Storage shall not obstruct any means of egress at any time.
- Flammable and combustible liquid storage shall be kept in an approved flammable liquids cabinet.



Storage

- All oily rags shall be disposed of in approved containers
- Keep all storage at least 30 inches away from furnaces and hot water heaters.



Summary

- The intent of this power point presentation is to provide you some helpful information in keeping your facility fire safe between our inspection visits. If you have any questions regarding the fire code, fire safety, or fire prevention programs for your facility please contact Captain Rick Prinz at 513-759-7241 or rprinz@westchesteroh.org