
S.O.P. #: 400-07

SUBJECT: FIELD INSPECTION PROGRAM

DIVISION: EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

Objective: To establish policies and procedures for an inspection program, for Field Operations personnel, which will include specific occupancies within each Battalion district.

General:

1. Written reports, inspection reports, and suggestions shall be forwarded to the Fire Marshal's Office.
2. Questions concerning code interpretations shall be directed to the District Fire Marshal. Questions of a serious or urgent nature may be telephoned directly to the Fire Marshal's Office.
3. Serious life hazards that are not corrected shall be reported immediately to the District Fire Marshal or the Fire Marshal's Office, and followed up with a completed Fire Inspection Report explaining the nature of the problem.

Section 1: Occupancies to be Inspected

- A. Residential (Garden Apartments, includes condominiums)
- B. Places of assembly (eating & drinking establishments)
- C. Educational (family child day-care homes)
- D. Mercantile
- E. Business
- F. Field personnel will continue to inspect Apartment Occupancies up to and including four (4) stories in height.
- G. Marinas

Note: Occupancies four (4) stories or more in height and all mall occupancies will not be inspected by Field Operations personnel.

Section 2: Responsibilities

- A. Fire Marshal's Office
 1. Recommend policy.
 2. Provide technical assistance and necessary training.
 3. Change to read: Distribute a list of late inspections on a monthly basis.

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B. Division/Battalion Chief

Ensure that inspections are completed in a timely manner.

C. Company Officer

1. Overall responsibility for completion of all inspections in their assigned district.
2. Completion of inspection reports.
3. Maintenance of an inspection file. Retain most recent inspections.

Section 3: Activities Prior to Inspection

A. All members of the inspection team shall:

1. Be familiar with all applicable codes and reference material.
2. Familiarize themselves with the occupancy to be inspected.
3. Be in proper Class "B" uniform.
4. Conduct themselves in a professional manner.
5. Abide by the rules and regulations.
6. Not conduct personal business.
7. Not handle or purchase merchandise.

Section 4: Inspection Procedures

A. Acceptable Entry Access.

1. Always enter through the main entrance.
2. Introduce yourself and explain that you are there to conduct a prevention inspection.
3. Request a guide to accompany you during the inspection, and if valuables are involved, insist on a guide.

B. Entry Refused.

1. When entry is refused because it is not convenient at that time, make an appointment agreeable to the schedule of you and the occupants.
2. If occupant refuses entry, or to make an appointment, leave courteously and use referral process contained in Section 8,4.B and follow up with a written report.

C. Conducting the Inspection.

1. After gaining entrance and acceptance for the inspection, obtain the information needed to complete the top of the Fire Inspection Report from the occupant before starting the actual inspection.
2. Proceed with inspection making notations of compliance or violations of the items listed on the Fire Inspection Report.
 - a. If, during the inspection, a Life Hazard or hazardous condition is noted, obtain immediate compliance, if possible. For example:
 - 1) Life hazard - exit doors blocked, chained or bolted.
 - 2) Hazardous condition - unsafe use of flammable liquids.
 - b. If unable to secure immediate compliance concerning a life safety hazard, contact the District Fire Marshal and/or the on-duty Battalion/Division Chief immediately and follow up with a written report to the main Fire Marshal's Office.
3. Before departing, have the occupant sign the Fire Inspection Report, then issue them the pink copy, and at this time, explain all the violations, if any.
 - a. If a reinspection is needed due to violations, set a date for the reinspection, as per instructions in Section 7 of this S.O.P.
 - b. Briefly express appreciation for courtesies extended to you, and commend occupants for their assistance in promoting fire safety within Baltimore County.

Section 5: Reinspection Policies

- A. It is very important for reinspection to be conducted on the assigned date by the same shift and, if possible, by the same person to establish respect for the program. If this reinspection date cannot be met, a call shall be placed to the occupant prior to the scheduled time.
 1. If, upon reinspection, all violations are corrected, make notation of same on the original Fire Inspection Report.
 2. If all violations have not been corrected, note the corrections and schedule a necessary reinspection date for items not in compliance.
 - a. When conducting the second reinspection and all violations have not been corrected, but in the judgement of the inspector the person(s) is attempting to comply, additional reinspection dates can be set. See Section 7 of this S.O.P. for reinspection intervals.
 - b. If the occupant indicates they will not comply, or has made little or no attempt to comply, refer this case, through the proper channels. These channels consist of the Company Commander, the Division/Battalion Chief, and then the District Fire Marshal.

3. Hazards Pertaining to Outside Agencies:

When hazardous conditions exist that fall into the jurisdiction of other agencies, such as: Buildings Department, Health Department, Electrical Department, etc., the inspection report shall be forwarded to the Office of the Fire Marshal with a note: "REFERRAL" and a brief description of the problem. The Fire Marshal's Office will channel these to the proper agency. Companies WILL NOT directly refer to other agencies.

Section 6: Inspector Schedule

A. Scheduling Inspections

1. Fire Specialists shall schedule inspections with arrangements convenient for the occupants of the occupancies to be inspected.
2. Responsibility for timely scheduling and completion of these inspections lies with the company commander.
3. A suggestion for scheduling inspections of occupancies would be to avoid the hours when the establishments usually do most of their business. Evening hours are highly recommended.

Section 7: Reinspection Schedule

A. When violations are noted on the initial inspection, a reinspection must be scheduled to assure compliance.

1. The officer-in-charge, prior to the initial inspection, will determine a date for reinspection, if needed, using the following guidelines:
 - a. If needed, give occupant the reinspection date at completion of the initial inspection.
 - b. Minor violations - Not life threatening: 15 to 30 days; e.g.,:
 - 1) Poor housekeeping
 - 2) Exit light not functioning.
 - c. Serious violations - Life hazard or threat: Should be corrected while on the scene, if possible.
 - 1) Blocked, locked, or obstructed exit or exit access.
 - 2) Improper storage of flammable liquids: 0-14 days. Note: Any improper storage affecting an exit should be addressed immediately.
 - d. Major Violations
 - 1) Requiring major modifications such as:
 - a) Sprinkler system installation
 - b) Insufficient exits: over 30 days

- 2) Depending on the modifications needed, an extended period beyond thirty (30) days may be deemed necessary.
- e. Each additional reinspection should be one-half the time allotted for the previous reinspection.

Section 8: Fire Inspection Report

A. Completion of Fire Inspection Report

1. General information

- a. Check number of copies of form (3 each)
 - 1) White - goes to Fire Marshal's Office
 - 2) Yellow - Station file.
 - 3) Pink - Stays with occupant.
- b. Use black ballpoint pen, using sufficient pressure to make a clear print on the pink copy.
- c. All information shall be printed, except for the signatures.

2. Information section (TOP) must be completed before you continue with inspection.

- a. Date - Date of inspection.
- b. Box # - Phantom box number.
- c. Hi-Rise - Number of stories, if greater than three stories.
- d. C or SR# - Used by the Fire Marshal's Office only.
- e. Occ. - Occupancy Type Code - These are taken from the system used by the Fire Marshal's Office and will be found in Appendix A.
- f. Page #1 of _____ - Left blank until report is complete - indicated number of pages of the report.
- g. Street number - address number (intersections are not to be used)
 - 1) Garden Apartments - If each building or set of units has an individual address:
 - a) Use the address of the rental office on the cover sheet.
 - b) A supplemental form will be used for each individual address inspected thereafter.
 - 2) All other Occupancies:
 - a) Complete Fire Inspection Report for each occupancy address.

- b) If shopping Center is inspected, complete Fire Inspection Report for each store address, plus a separate report for the shopping center in general. (May have a common basement)
 - h. Street - Name of street.
 - i. Suite/apartment # - If applicable.
 - j. Zip Code - Postal zip code.
 - k. Occupancy name and phone number - Name of store, business or apartment complex being inspected. If within a shopping center, also enter in this block the name of the shopping center.
 - l. Former occupancy name - name of previous business, if the occupancy has changed since last inspected. (This is necessary to update records.)
 - m. Building Owner and phone number - (Owner of building).
 - n. Owner/Representative - Name of responsible person that accompanies you on the inspection; preferably the manager or person in-charge.
 - o. Business Owner's name and address - Business Owner's name and address.
3. Violations Checklist:
- a. Check appropriate violation.
 - 1) Code Number - number of the specific code violation, refer to, N.F.P.A. #101, NFPA 1 Fire Prevention Code or the County Fire Code.
 - 2) Action Required - Write in action to be taken to abate the violation.
 - 3) Location - Write in the location where the violation is located.
 - 4) Complete - When violation has been corrected, fill in the date completed and initial.
4. Reinspection Dates:
- a. Reinspection Date - Date reinspection will be conducted.
 - b. Referral - When is it obvious that a occupancy will not comply after a reasonable time has been given, or if it is felt that a referral is necessary, the following guidelines shall be followed:
 - 1) Captain.

The Captain will investigate and try to resolve the problem, or, if necessary, refer the situation to the Division/Battalion Chief. The Captain must sign and date the Fire Inspection Report.

2) Division/Battalion Chief.

The Division/Battalion Chief will investigate and try to resolve the problem, or, if necessary, refer the problem to the District Fire Marshal. The Division/Battalion Chief will sign and date the Fire Inspection Report.

3) District Fire Marshal.

When a referral for non-compliance is received by the District Fire Marshal, they will contact the occupant and, if necessary, issue a citation (FINE) for failure to comply with Baltimore County Fire Code.

- c. Inspected By - Print name of inspector (also I.D.#), and sign in signature space.
- d. Received By - Signature of person receiving report and date. Should be the manager or the person in charge.
- e. Signature - Signature of inspector conducting the inspection.
- f. Completed - Upon correction of all violations, signature of inspector completing the inspection and the date (Month-Day-Year).
- g. Court Action and Court Date - To be used if Court action becomes necessary.

B. Fire Inspection Report Distribution

- 1. No violations:
 - a. White copy to Fire Marshal's Office.
 - b. Yellow copy in station file.
 - c. Pink copy to occupant.

Note: PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION LEGIBLY, EXCEPT SIGNATURES. THESE ARE LEGAL DOCUMENTS.

- 2. Violations:
 - a. White and yellow copies are kept together until after reinspection.
 - b. Pink copy to occupant.

Section 9: Supplemental Inspection Report

A. Completion of Supplemental Inspection Report - When there is insufficient room on the Fire Inspection Report to list violations or comments, use supplemental form, following the same format as found on the Fire Inspection Report.

- 1. Check number of copies of form (3 each).
 - a. White - to Fire Marshal's Office, attached to Fire Inspection Report.

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- b. Yellow - Inspectors or station copy.
- c. Pink - Occupant copy.
2. Use ball point pen.
 - a. Preferably black ink.
 - b. Use sufficient pressure to make a clear print on the pink copy.
 - c. All information shall be printed, except the signatures.
- B. Supplemental Inspection Report - Information Section
 1. Date - The actual date of the inspection.
 2. Firm Name
 - a. Should be the name of the company, business, apartment complex, etc., being inspected.
 - b. If a firm is not designated, enter the name of the owner of the building.
 3. Address
 - a. Must contain:
 - 1) Street name,
 - 2) Street number.
 - b. Garden Apartments
 - 1) Write in "SEE BELOW".
 - 2) List addresses with violations or comments.
 4. Inspector - Signature of inspector.
 5. Supervisor
 - a. Line out the word, "Supervisor", and print the word, "Occupant", underneath.
 - b. After you have reviewed the Supplemental Inspection Report with the property representative, have them sign in this area.
- C. Supplemental Inspection Report - Distribution.

Same as Fire Inspection Report.

Note: The Supplemental Inspection Report will ALWAYS be accompanied by a Fire Inspection Report.

Section 10: Station Ledger

- A. Information to be reported:
 - 1. Date.
 - 2. Shift on duty.
 - 3. Number of buildings inspected (Addresses).
 - 4. Number of buildings reinspected. (Addresses).

Section 11: Station Messages.

- A. Messages received at the station concerning a fire inspection or reinspection should be passed on to the Officer-in-Charge of the Shift concerned.
- B. This information should be written down in an inspection Pass-on-Book currently being used.
- C. Pass-on-Book should include:
 - 1. Caller's name.
 - 2. Telephone number.
 - 3. Property and address involved.
 - 4. Nature of the call.
 - 5. Inspector's name on the inspection report.
- D. The Officer-in-Charge of the shift concerned should telephone the caller, as soon as possible.

Section 12: Vacant Occupancy Inspections

- A. Each month, visit the vacant occupancies on your inspection list to confirm that the occupancies are still vacant.
- B. If another business has moved into a location, inspect it and make any necessary changes in the computer. (Get assistance from the main FMO if needed)
- C. Other than instances where the location is no longer vacant as described above, vacant occupancies will not require an actual inspection, just confirmation that they are still vacant with an actual visit.
- D. THE ONLY EXCEPTION WILL BE WHEN THE BUILDING IS A VACANT "STAND ALONE" STRUCTURE WITH A SPRINKLER SYSTEM. Every attempt should be made to enter these occupancies and conduct an inspection. Seek assistance from your District Fire Marshal where needed.
- E. Family Daycare Occupancies that appear as "vacant" do not have to be confirmed. Contact your District Fire Marshal or the main FMO to have the status of these occupancies changed to "inactive" status. This will prevent these from reappearing, annually, on the monthly late list.

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Appendix A

Occupancy	New Code	Former Occupancy Codes
Assembly		
Church	130	130-133, 135-139
Assembly Other Than Church	100	100-129, 134, 140-199
Educational		
Preschool (Instructional)	211	Same
Elementary School	213	Same
Middle School	214	Same
High School	215	Same
Private Elementary School	223	
Private Middle School	224	
Private High School	225	
Child Care		
Family Day Care	323	321 (Currently in separate file)
Daycare Center	321	321
Foster Home	419	323, 419
Institutional		
ALU	369	Same
Residential Board and Care	339	Same
Group Senior Assisted		
Housing (small)	338	
Nursing Home	311	Same
Hospital	331	330-339
Jail	340	340-349
Industry/Manufacturing	700	600-699, 700-799
Storage		
Other Than Marinas	800	800-884, 886-899
Marinas	885	Same
Outdoor Property	930	900-909, 920-980, 982-999
Construction Site	981	981, 910-914, 916-919
Residential		
1 & 2 Family	410	410-418
Apartments	420	422-429
Rooming/Boarding House	430	430-439
Hotel	440	440-449
Motel	450	450-459
Dormitory	460	460-469

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Mercantile		
Class A	501	531, 555, 581, 511
Class B	502	530, 532-539, 554, 573, 582, 583
Class C	503	500-510, 512-529, 540-553, 556-560 570-579, 580, 584, 589
Mall (Any Store or Common Area)	585	Same
Business	590	590-599