



CITY OF TOPEKA



Fire Department
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Self-Inspection Information

1. Is the building or unit address numbers/letters visible from the street?

Building address and unit numbers should be maintained in good condition, free from fading, deterioration, etc. They should be clearly visible from the street and not blocked by landscaping, other signage, or displays. If applicable, units or suites should be clearly marked on or above front and rear doors.

2. Is there a minimum of 3-foot clearance around the on-site fire hydrant?

On-site hydrants should be free from obstructions, for example parked cars, signage, and landscaping for at least 3 feet around them in all directions. This allows for the attachment of fire hose and the proper and easy operation of the top valve of the hydrant.

3. Do all exit doors remain unlocked during business hours?

All doors which are marked with exit signage must remain unlocked and free from obstructions or impediments to their use from the inside at all times that the space is occupied.

4. Are the exit doors operable from the inside without the use of a key or special knowledge?

All doors which are marked with exit signage must open without the need for unlocking them with keys, key codes, swipe cards, etc. when the building is to be evacuated. Secured openings used for exit, must be equipped to unlock when the fire alarm is activated or power is lost to the space.

5. Are illuminated exit signs fully illuminated in the normal and back up modes? Push the test button to determine back up functionality.

Illuminated exit signs are equipped with both a primary power source and back-up battery system. The lamps in the exit sign must function using both sources of power. Checking the primary power source lamps is done by viewing the sign under normal operation and verifying that both lamps are lit. If they are not, one side of the sign or both will be dim. To test the back-up power system and lamps, press the test button on the exit sign for 30 seconds and watch the lamps to see if they activate. If they activate, watch the lamps to see if their illumination fades over the 30 seconds of continues to shine brightly.

- 6. Do the emergency lighting units work properly? Conduct a test by pushing the test button for at least 30 seconds. A 90 minute test should be performed annually.**

To test the emergency lighting power supply and lamps, press the test button on the emergency lighting unit for 30 seconds. Both lamps should light brightly and remain brightly lit throughout the 30 second test. If the lamps light dimly or not at all, the lamps, battery or fixture requires replacement; this test should be conducted monthly. Once per year the power should be disconnected from the lamps and they should stay illuminated for a minimum of 90 minutes. If they do not stay lit the unit should be serviced or battery replaced.

- 7. Are exit aisles, hallways stairways clear of obstructions?**

All exit aisles, hallways, and stairs must be kept free of obstructions. These areas should be kept free of permanent or temporary installations or storage which would impede egress from served spaces. For example, dollies of product, mail carts, or stacks of boxes.

- 8. Are exit corridors, hallways or under stairs free of combustible storage?**

All exit corridors, hallways, and under stairs should be kept free of permanent or temporary storage of combustibles. Combustibles are defined as any material which will readily catch fire and burn, including but not limited to paper, cardboard, plastics, wood, etc.

- 9. Are all electrical outlets, switches and junction boxes covered with proper cover plates?**

All electrical outlets, switches, and junction boxes should have proper cover plates installed at all times. Exposed wiring can be an electrocution or fire hazard.

- 10. Are circuit breakers in panels labeled to identify the area protected?**

Circuit breaker boxes should have clearly readable labels to identify the type of service, i.e. lights, outlets, equipment supplied and the location of the service being provided, for example, waiting room lights or kitchen receptacles.

- 11. Are no extension cords in use as permanent wiring? Extension cords are not to be used in place of permanent wiring. They may be utilized to supply power to a single small appliance such as a fan, radio or power tools.**

The use of extension cords is limited to temporary use only. They can be used to supply power to a single portable piece of equipment only as long as the equipment is being used during the work day. For example, using an extension cord to power a drill or saw which is put away when the work is finished. They cannot be used to power a piece of stationary equipment or permanent fixture.

- 12. Are power strips, with a built-in breaker, plugged directly into approved electrical outlets? No power strip on power strip use.**

Power strips or "surge protectors" must be plugged directly into a wall or floor outlet. They may not be plugged into an extension cord or another power strip to extend their reach, because the extra power drawn through the extension cord or power

strip may exceed their capacity causing a fire hazard through overheating or a short circuit.

13. Are portable electric space heaters plugged directly into wall outlets and a minimum of 3 feet away from combustibles?

Portable electric space heaters may be used to provide supplemental heat as long as they are plugged directly into a wall or floor outlet, not into an extension cord or power strip. They must also be placed a minimum of 3 feet from any combustible materials, except carpeting.

14. Are equipment rooms free of combustibles?

Combustibles are not to be stored in boiler rooms, mechanical rooms or electrical equipment rooms.

15. Is there at least 30 inches of clearance from combustible items around hot water heaters and furnaces?

Combustible materials placed too closely to an appliance can ignite due to direct contact with flames or heating elements or radiant heat build-up on their surfaces. Combustible materials are defined as any materials which may ignite when a sufficient heat source is applied, i.e. paper, cardboard, fabrics, plastics, etc.

16. Is storage maintained a minimum of 2 feet below the ceiling? Maintain storage at least 2 feet below the ceiling.

Storage should be maintained in all areas a minimum of 2 feet below the ceiling surface, to prevent the interruption of sprinkler patterns in buildings equipped with fire suppression sprinklers. It also prevents damage to ceiling materials which may allow for the passage of heat, smoke, and fire into the void spaces above.

17. Are ceiling tiles fixed in place? This allows the ceiling to act as a heat collector for fire protection systems and to prevent the passage of smoke and fire.

In ceiling assemblies with removable tiles are the tiles fixed in place. This is accomplished with clips. In areas where the ceiling is part of a fire rated assembly, the use of tiles of special materials secured with clip is required to maintain a fire barrier.

18. Are there an adequate number of fire extinguishers? There should be no more than a 75-foot travel distance to a fire extinguisher. Extinguishers should be an all-purpose ABC type – minimum U.L. rating of 2A-10BC.

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19. Is the fire extinguisher firmly mounted to a stable structure, visible, accessible and ready for use? Free standing is not acceptable.

All fire extinguishers required for a particular occupancy type must be firmly mounted. The mounting method may be in a cabinet assembly or on a mounting bracket. The fire extinguisher(s) must be clearly visible without being obscured with stored items, interior decorations, furniture, plantings, etc. They must also be

accessible and ready to use without requiring special tools or knowledge, for example not being wire tied to the mounting bracket which would require scissors or a knife to free them.

20. Has the fire extinguisher(s) been inspected and tagged to indicate a current annual inspection?

Fire extinguishers are required to have an annual inspection by a certified technician who will test them and recertify them for another year. After that inspection the technician will affix a dated tag to the fire extinguisher which will list the date of the inspection and indirectly give the date of the next required inspection (a year from the date marked on the tag). On the reverse side of the tag is usually a grid to record the required monthly inspection. The monthly inspection can be performed by any person in the occupancy that has been trained to do so. While recording of the monthly inspection on the tag is very convenient, it can also be recorded in a log, spreadsheet, or database, as long as the method chosen can be provided to the fire inspector who performs the periodic inspection of the occupancy.

21. Are batteries replaced in single station smoke detectors annually?

Smoke detectors, even those hardwired into the domestic power of an occupancy, are equipped with a battery to supply power in the case of a power failure. Those batteries require annual replacement per the code.

22. If there is a fire alarm system, has the system been inspected within the past (12) months by a state licensed contractor? If yes, attach a copy of the inspection report.

Fire alarm systems in commercial occupancies are required by code to have an annual inspection of the system and its components to ensure that everything is working properly. The inspection must be completed by a state licensed contractor who will give you a written report of their findings after completing the inspection. A copy of this paperwork needs to be attached to this form.

23. If there is a fire sprinkler system, has the system been inspected within the past (12) months by a state licensed contractor? If yes, attach a copy of the inspection report.

Fire suppression systems in commercial occupancies are required by code to have an annual inspection of the system and all of its components. The inspection must be completed by a state licensed contractor who will give you a written report of their findings after completing the inspection. A copy of this paperwork needs to be attached to this form.

24. Are compressed gas cylinders such as oxygen, acetylene, argon, nitrogen, and nitrous-oxide secured to a fixed structure or on carts to prevent them from falling? If yes, provide the name of the compressed gas and quantity of each.

Many safeguards have been put into place by cylinder manufacturers to keep the users of compressed gas cylinders from being injured by the cylinders or their contents should they become damaged. The leading cause for their damage is falling, which is why the code requires that they be secured in an approved manner and not free standing. They can be chained, strapped, or housed in a rack system.

In the case of welding gases, they can be strapped or otherwise secured to a rolling cart. The key is to prevent them from being knocked over and having their valve knocked loose or off, creating a dangerous “rocket” propelled by potentially flammable gases.