

Central Joint Fire District

Standard Operating Procedure



Central Joint Fire District

SUBJECT: Fire Safety Inspection

SOP Number: 121D
Effective Date: 5/5/92
Revised Date:
Approved:

PURPOSE: The purpose of this standard is define basic guidelines, philosophies, and procedures to be used when conducting fire safety inspections.

SCOPE: This standard shall apply all members of the department involved in or with the conduct of fire safety inspections.

ENFORCEMENT: The Fire Chief shall be responsible for the enforcement of this standard for the protection of life and property and the good of the department.

APPLICATION:

121.1 Purpose of Inspections

The purpose of fire safety inspections, is ultimately to prevent fires from occurring, and in addition, the documentation and correction of hazards and unsafe conditions present in, and/or around buildings, structures, tanks, containers, or vehicles.

121.2 Conduct of Inspections

- 1) All fire safety inspections shall be conducted by certified Fire Safety Inspectors. The Central Joint Fire District Board of Trustees shall approve and appoint all Fire Safety Inspectors for the fire district. All Fire Safety Inspectors shall report directly to the Fire Chief or his designee.
- 2) All fire safety inspections shall be conducted with no less than two members of the department present, one of which shall be a State of Ohio certified Fire Safety Inspector, or the Fire Chief.
- 3) Inspection teams shall prepare for the inspection by:
 - a) Reviewing applicable codes prior to conducting the actual inspection. These codes shall include, but not be limited to the Ohio Fire Code, Ohio Basic Building Code, National Electrical Code, applicable NFPA standards, local fire regulations, and such regulations as set forth by the Bureau of Underground Storage Tanks, and federal SARA Title III requirements.
 - b) Reviewing previous inspection reports.
 - c) Review maps, plans, and water supplies.

- 4) To conduct fire inspections it is necessary to secure the cooperation of the public when making inspections, friendly, open attitudes are required.
 - a) The inspection team, upon arrival at the inspection location shall contact the person in charge and secure permission to inspect the premises.
 - b) Present identification and explain reason for inspection.
 - c) Request and escort by the owner or other responsible person who is familiar with the premises.
- 5) The Fire Chief shall be notified prior to conducting any inspection.

121.3 Inspection Techniques

- 1) Public assembly occupancies should be inspected while occupied and unoccupied.
- 2) When inspecting large industrial complexes tour the yard first to get a feel for the layout and relationship of the various structures. It might be wise to start on the roof of the tallest building to determine the layout.
- 3) All first time inspections shall have plans of the property drawn prior to the inspection. Such plans shall include dimensions, and location of water supplies, special hazards, utilities, and fire protection systems.
- 4) Plot plans for the property, as well as floor plans for each structure, should be updated.
- 5) Before entering the building, size up the structure.
- 6) Use a systematic approach. Inspect from the top down, or the bottom up.
- 7) Take notes on discrepancies.
- 8) When violations of applicable fire codes are discovered, the owner, occupant, or responsible person, shall be made aware of the discrepancy. When the situation is not corrected during the inspection, or is an uncorrected recurring violation, a citation shall be issued as outlined in 121.5 of this standard.
- 9) Any violations requiring documentation shall be researched, and the proper form completed and filled.
- 10) Under no circumstances shall violations or citations be committed to paper and issued at the time of inspection. Inspection teams shall first research discrepancies to determine the most applicable code under which the violation is to be cited. After the applicable code has been cited, the proper documentation shall be completed and a copy served on the owner/occupant of the inspected property.

121.4 General

- 1) General discrepancies to look for
 - a) Accumulated waste material
 - b) Kind and location of receptacles for ashes
 - c) Method of handling and storing waste paper
 - d) Presence of rags containing paint, vegetable oils, etc.
 - e) Chimney defects, height above the roof and clearance of wood beams
 - f) Electric wiring as on broken fixtures, improper support, damaged insulation, fuses bridged or too large, fuse or switch box covers open or missing, improper use of flexible cords (zip cord), inflammable materials in contact with light bulbs, location of shutoffs.
 - g) Gas piping as to clearance of gas appliances from combustible material, proper venting of appliances, use of rubber hose connections, flexible tubing, location of shut off in building and at curb.

- h) Inflammable liquids as to type and construction of storage containers, quantity stored, location, method used for drawing liquids from the containers, distance from open flame or other sources of ignition.
 - i) Mechanical refrigerating units should be checked for possible leakage, kind of gas contained in system, method of disposal should gas be released.
 - j) Location and condition of cellar drains
 - k) Structural aspects of buildings, relative to walls, floor and roof construction, location of stairways, elevators, open shafts, fire doors, etc.
 - l) Accessibility, serviceability, and use of exits, fire escapes, stairways and other floor openings from both a fire fighting and means of egress standpoint.
 - m) Obstructions created by partitions and merchandise
 - n) Features relative to ventilation, including windows, scuttles, skylights, elevators, penthouses, etc.
 - o) Type and nature of contents
 - p) Exposure to fire spread to or from adjacent buildings
 - q) Use of adjacent buildings for fire fighting or rescue purposes
 - r) Location and condition of fire protection equipment, such as sprinklers, standpipes, alarm systems, extinguishers, etc. Such fire protection equipment requiring testing shall be tested or evaluated for serviceability as required.
 - s) Violations of laws or regulations relative to construction, installation of equipment, permits, licenses, etc.
 - t) Salvage operations due to nature and kind of stock on premises
 - u) Hazards involved through the use of atomic energy or radioactive material
 - v) Proper operation of emergency lighting and exit lights
- 2) Inspections may reveal conditions hazardous to the health and safety of owners, occupants, and the general public, which are not specifically covered by applicable fire codes. If such conditions are noted the Fire Safety Inspector shall bring such conditions to the attention of the property owners, occupants, and other inspection authorities as is necessary for the correction of such discrepancies.
- 3) Inspections based on citizen complaints shall be conducted in a timely manner. When possible, the complainant shall be informed of the results of the inspections and of the corrective actions being undertaken for compliance.

121.5 Post Inspection

- 1) Upon completion of the inspection, the inspection team shall research any noted violations and document violations, and corrective action to be taken on form F 1512.
- 2) A copy of form F 1512 shall be served on the responsible party. The property owner, occupant, or responsible party shall sign form F 1512 to acknowledge receipt of violations, and corrective action to be taken.
- 3) The original copy of all completed documentation shall be on file at the fire station, the second copy shall be given to the property owner, occupant, or responsible party, and the third copy shall be the Fire Safety Inspector's personal copy.
- 4) Schedule follow up inspections at the earliest possible time.
- 5) Further legal action is available and will be taken if said violations are not corrected within an appropriate time frame.
- 6) Where violations represent a clear hazard of life or property, it may be necessary for the Fire Safety Inspector to take immediate action to correct unsafe conditions. Entrance into private property, shutdown of an operation, evacuation of a building or withdrawal of permits are actions the inspector may find necessary to insure public safety. In all cases, actions must

be based on clearly demonstrable threats to public safety, showing that delay would provide an unreasonable danger to residents, occupants, guests or the public, and this judgment is based on accepted standards and concepts of safety.

121.6 Records

- 1) All fire inspection records shall be filled in triplicate. The original copy of all completed documentation shall be on file at the fire station, the second copy shall be given to the property owner, occupant, or responsible party, the third copy shall be the Fire Safety Inspector's personal copy.
- 2) All records shall contain date, time, and signature of the property owner, occupant, or responsible party, and Fire Safety Inspector.
- 3) All violations shall be typewritten and shall reference all codes in accordance with said violations.