

City of Chico Fire Department

Pre-Inspection Checklist for Business Owners and Tenants

This guide is provided to business and property owners to help prepare for a scheduled inspection. By completing this pre-inspection checklist and correcting any deficiencies prior to your scheduled inspection, you will help the inspection process move more efficiently and reduce or eliminate the need for a re-inspection. If you have any questions about this checklist or the program please contact the Chico Fire Department at **530-897-3400** or **send an email to: fire-prevention@chicoca.gov**.

Your building inspection will include four main areas: exiting and life safety, fire protection systems, building maintenance and general condition, and finally special fire hazards that may be specific to your type of business.

Exiting and Life Safety

Exits

- Exit aisles, and corridors are free of storage or other obstructions.
- Exit access aisles are not blocked by tables, chairs, or other furniture, equipment or decorations.

Exit Doors and Locking Hardware

- Exit doors are able to open fully and swing freely.
- Exit doors are visible and accessible. Doors must unlock and unlatch with a single motion of the door handle. (EXAMPLE: an exit door which requires one motion to unlock a dead bolt and a second motion to open the door is NOT allowed).
- Exit doors shall not be chained, barred, or bolted or otherwise be prevented from opening.
- Front main doors may have key locking hardware provided a sign stating, "Door To Remain Unlocked When The Building Is Occupied" is placed above the door.

Exit Signs and Emergency Lighting

- EXIT signs shall be provided to indicate the location of exit doors unless the doors are clearly identifiable as exit doors.
- EXIT signs shall be provided within the business to clearly identify the direction of exit travel.
- EXIT signs shall be internally or externally lit or be an approved self-luminous (glow in the dark) type of sign. Lit signs shall also have a battery backup to keep the sign lit during a power failure (Signs with built in battery backup will have a TEST button on the side of the sign or may be tested by cutting power to the signs at the circuit breaker panel.)
- Emergency lighting shall be provided when 2 or more exits are required.
- Emergency lights shall provide lighting along the path of exit travel for not less than 90 minutes.
- EXIT signs and emergency lights shall be maintained in an operational condition at all times and must not be damaged.

Fire Protection Systems

- Fire extinguishers are visible and accessible. A FIRE EXTINGUISHER sign is provided to indicate location of a fire extinguisher if extinguisher is visibly blocked by racks, fixtures, or other building features.
- Fire extinguishers have been serviced annually by a licensed technician and have current service tags attached (A service tag will have punch holes in the day, date, and year that the extinguisher was **last** serviced).
- The automatic fire sprinkler system (if present) has current annual inspection and five year certification tags attached by a licensed contractor. The system has also been inspected quarterly by a person familiar with the system.
- Records of fire sprinkler system inspections, testing, and certification shall be kept on site and will be available for review during the inspection.**
- Storage is kept a minimum of 18 inches below the sprinkler deflectors. Nothing is attached to or hung from sprinkler heads or system piping. Sprinkler heads have not been painted and are free of dust and corrosion.
- Fire alarm/waterflow monitoring system (if present) has been inspected and tested at least annually by a licensed technician. **Records of fire alarm system inspections and tests shall be kept on site and available for review during the inspection.**
- Indicator lights on the fire alarm control panel show normal operation and are free of trouble or supervisory signals.
- Fire alarm components including pull stations, horn/strobe devices, detectors, and bells are accessible and appear to be in working order.
- Hood extinguishing ("Ansul") system for commercial cooking facilities has been inspected, serviced and tagged by a licensed technician within the last 6 months.
- Cooking appliances have not been moved or changed without properly readjusting system spray nozzles for the new equipment or configuration.
- Grease caps are present and in place for all nozzles. The manual pull station is visible and accessible along a path of exit travel (not blocked by racks, shelves, or other equipment or fixtures).

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Building Components and Systems

- Building address and suite numbers are clearly posted on a solid and contrasting background to provide good visibility. Numbers are a minimum of 6 inches in size. Larger numbers may be required if building is set back from street.
- Fire lanes (if present) are clearly marked with a red curb and the words NO PARKING and FIRE LANE either stenciled on the curb or by posted signs. Markings and signs shall be maintained to properly indicate emergency access lanes.
- Fire hydrants, fire department connections and valves for fire sprinkler systems are not hidden or obstructed by landscape plans or structures.
- Dumpsters and other waste containers are kept a minimum of 5 feet away from combustible walls and eave lines of building. Clearance must be provided to keep a trash fire from damaging your building.
- The inside and outside of the building are kept organized and in an orderly manner. Good housekeeping practices prevent the buildup of waste materials and weeds around the property and prevent accumulation of storage or other materials from creating a fire hazard.
- Heating and cooking appliances are in good working order, kept clean, and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Extension cords are not used as permanent wiring. Extension cords are only allowed for temporary use for portable equipment.
- Power strips (if used) must be UL listed and provided with circuit breaker protection **and plug directly into a wall outlet.**
- Electrical outlets and switches have cover plates in place and are not damaged. Electrical panels do not have holes or openings that would allow contact with energized electrical wires or equipment.
- 3 feet of clear space is provided in front of and around electrical service panels. Electrical rooms are properly marked with a sign "ELECTRICAL ROOM".
- Electrical wiring, equipment, motors and appliances are maintained in good condition and used in an approved manner.
- Grease hoods and ducts (Restaurants) are inspected regularly and cleaned as necessary to prevent grease from accumulating. **Records of inspections and cleanings are kept on site and available for review during the inspection.**

Special Conditions and Common Fire Hazards

- Combustible materials such as wood, paper, plastic, and rags are kept at least 3 feet away from heat sources.
- Decorations must not obstruct or hide fire extinguishers, fire alarm devices, EXIT signs, or fire sprinkler heads.
- Candles or open flame decorative devices (if allowed) are used only on a noncombustible surface and have an enclosed flame. Lit candles must NEVER be left unattended.
- DO NOT OVERLOAD ELECTRICAL OUTLETS by using multiplug adaptors or extension cords.
- Portable electric heaters (if allowed) must be UL listed, have tip over shut off protection, and should be kept at least 3 feet from combustible materials.
- Portable propane tanks and heaters shall NOT be used or stored inside buildings.
- Amounts of flammable/combustible liquids used for cleaning or maintenance must be minimized and materials must be stored in approved containers and stored in an approved location. Properly dispose of excess materials that will no longer be used.
- Prevent the storage or buildup of combustible materials within or around the building. Cardboard boxes, idle pallets, packing materials, and other bulk materials often build up to dangerous levels and create a significant hazard if not disposed of or stored properly.
- Review fire safety and evacuation plans with your employees. Consider practicing the plan and scheduling fire extinguisher training.

This list is NOT a complete list of items which may be addressed during the inspection but rather as a guide for common items found during inspections. Please take some time and use this list to go through your business before the inspection. If you have questions or need more help understanding requirements, please call the Chico Fire Department at 530-897-3400 during regular business hours or email: fire-prevention@chicoca.gov.