



Code Outreach Program – Fire Safety Inspections of Assembly Occupancies Part 2 of 3 – Inspection

Part 1 of this Code Outreach Program series asked code enforcement officials and building safety inspectors to provide examples of the most common violations encountered during inspections of Assembly Occupancies. Below is a list of the responses and associated code references, where applicable:

1. Violations cited on third-party inspection reports. Code violations are sometimes cited on third-party inspection reports but never corrected. It is important that these reports are carefully reviewed and all violations that were previously cited have been corrected.
2. Improper storage of materials. Section 315.3 of the [2015 International Fire Code](#) (2015 IFC) addresses the general storage of material in buildings, specifically addresses ceiling clearances for both sprinklered and non-sprinklered buildings, and prohibits combustible materials in the means of egress, equipment rooms (such as boiler rooms), mechanical and electrical equipment rooms, and fire command centers.
3. Emergency lighting and exit sign testing. The 2015 IFC addresses maintenance of the means of egress in Section 1031, and maintenance of emergency power and standby power in Section 604. Section 1031.4 requires exit signs to be installed and maintained in accordance with Section 1013. Section 1013.3 requires exit signs to be internally or externally illuminated at all times, except tactile signs. Section 604.2.5 requires signs to be illuminated for a duration of at least 90 minutes in the event of a power failure. Section 604.6 addresses the periodic inspection and testing of emergency lighting, including record retention requirements of such tests.
4. Fire doors propped open or fail to self-close and latch. Section 703.2 of the 2015 IFC requires opening protectives to be maintained in accordance with the 2015 IFC and [NFPA 80 \(2013 edition\)](#). Section 703.2.2 of the IFC requires maintenance of hold-open devices and automatic closing devices; Section 703.2.3 requires the door to close and latch from the full open and any partially open position.
5. Buildings lacking proper carbon monoxide (CO) protection. Chapter 7, Item 7.21 of the [2017 Uniform Code Supplement](#) amends Section 915 of the 2015 IFC in its entirety to address carbon monoxide detection systems in new and existing buildings. With some exceptions, Section 915.3 includes detection for all commercial buildings that contain a CO source, is attached to a garage, and/or is attached to any other motor-vehicle-related occupancy. Refer to Section 915.3(c)(2) for a complete list of exceptions.
6. Fire extinguishers not inspected, improperly located, or missing. Portable fire extinguishers are required to be installed and maintained in accordance with Section 906 of the 2015 IFC and [NFPA 10 \(2013 edition\)](#). Extinguishers shall be in an unobstructed/unobscured, conspicuous location. Handheld extinguishers that are not in cabinets are to be properly placed on hangers or brackets and maintain a minimum clearance of 4-inches from the floor to the bottom of the extinguisher. The maximum height to the top of the extinguishers shall not exceed 5 feet or 3.5 feet, depending on if the extinguisher is under or over 40 pounds, respectively. Chapter 7 of NFPA 10 requires extinguishers to be inspected once a month and records of inspections to be retained.

Other helpful tips while performing fire safety and property maintenance inspections are as follows:

1. Bring a flashlight, tape measure, pen, notepad, electrical tester, hardhat, digital camera, the current fire and property maintenance codes, Uniform Code Supplement, and any applicable NYCRR Part (such as Part 1264).
2. Have the owner perform equipment tests, such as exit light batteries, CO detectors, fire alarms, etc.
3. Request access to all spaces, such as accessory occupancies, utility rooms, storage closets, cooking areas, concealed spaces, etc.
4. Don't be afraid to cite a violation if warranted. A seemingly minor violation, if left uncorrected, could result in a serious problem.

The DSBC and OFPC would like to thank everyone who submitted comments and violations; your involvement and contributions to this program help to make it a success!

Please look for Part 3 of this Code Outreach Program at the end of next month.

DBSC - A Division of Department of State
OFPC – An Office of the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Services

If you have questions pertaining to the Code Outreach Program, email us at COP.codes@dos.ny.gov

If you have questions pertaining to the Uniform Code or Energy Code, email our technical support group at: codes@dos.ny.gov

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