



HOTEL AND APARTMENT INSPECTION (R1 & R2) OPERATING GUIDE

SAN FRANCISCO FIRE DEPARTMENT

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Hotel and Apartment Inspection
(R1 & R2) Operating Guide
Revised January 2008

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FOREWORD

The goal of this manual is to establish standard operating practices as authorized by the Chief of Department and implemented by the Division of Training.

The purpose of this manual is to provide all members with the essential information necessary to fulfill the duties of their positions, and to provide a standard text whereby company officers can:

- Enforce standard drill guidelines authorized as a basis of operation for all companies.
- Align company drills to standards as adopted by the Division of Training.
- Maintain a high degree of proficiency, both personally and among their subordinates.

All manuals shall be kept up to date so that all officers may use the material contained in the various manuals to meet the requirements of their responsibility.

Conditions will develop in fire fighting situations where standard methods of operation will not be applicable. Therefore, nothing contained in these manuals shall be interpreted as an obstacle to the experience, initiative, and ingenuity of officers in overcoming the complexities that exist under actual fire ground conditions.

To maintain the intent of standard guidelines and practices, no correction, modification, expansion, or other revision of this manual shall be made unless authorized by the Chief of Department. Suggestions for correction, modification or expansion of this manual shall be submitted to the Division of Training. Suggestions will be given due consideration, and if adopted, notice of their adoption and copies of the changes made will be made available to all members by the Division of Training.

Joanne Hayes-White
Chief of Department

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SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

Section 13146.2 of the California Health and Safety Code states that all local fire departments shall annually inspect all structures subject to subsection (b) of Section 17921 for compliance with building standards and other regulations of the State Fire Marshal.

Subsection (b) of Section 17921 identifies those structures as hotels, motels, lodging houses and apartment buildings.

The 2007 California Building Code, Section 310.1 identifies Residential occupancies as the following:

Residential Group “R” includes, among others, the use of a building or structure, or portion thereof, for sleeping purposes when not classified as an Institutional Group I. Residential occupancies shall include the following:

R-1

Residential occupancies containing sleeping units where the occupants are primarily transient in nature, including the following:

- Boarding houses (transient)
- Hotels (transient)
- Motels (transient)

R-2

Residential occupancies containing sleeping units or more than two dwelling units where the occupants are primarily permanent in nature, including:

- Apartment houses
- Boarding houses (not transient)
- Convents
- Dormitories
- Fraternities and sororities
- Hotels (non transient)
- Monasteries
- Motels (non transient)
- Vacation timeshare properties

R-3

Residential occupancies where the occupants are primarily permanent in nature and not classified as Group R1, R2, R3-1, R4 (buildings arranged for residential care or assisted living facilities) or I, including:

- Buildings other than townhouses that do not contain more than two dwelling units.
- Townhouses not more than three stories above grade in height with a separate means of egress.

The various companies of the San Francisco Fire Department will perform the required Health and Safety code inspections of Apartment and Hotels (R1 & R2 residencies such as hotels, motels, apartment buildings, condominiums and qualifying townhouses). The inspections will be limited to structures that are not high rises (less than 75 feet). The inspection of residential high rises (more than 75 feet) will be conducted by inspectors assigned to the Bureau of Fire Prevention. Most of the buildings that will be inspected in the Apartment and Hotels Inspection Program will have nine or more units. On occasion, building owners of apartments (R2 properties) that have less than nine units have voluntarily requested that their properties also be inspected. Those buildings have been added to the program.

Fire prevention inspections are conducted to determine that reasonable fire safety exists. The inspections help the Department accomplish its mission of protecting property and saving lives. A good inspection program serves to remind building owners, property managers and tenants of the teamwork that is required to maintain a fire safe structure.

The goal of any inspection should be the cooperative maintenance of a fire safe environment. This is done by ensuring that fire codes are complied with and that any compromising situation is corrected in an appropriate time frame. The inspection conducted by an SFFD company is an opportunity for the members of the Department to educate members of the public about fire safety. The time spent on an inspection is also a time to become familiar with buildings, unusual access issues, alarm systems and other fire protection systems in a company's response area.

SECTION 2. INSPECTION PROCEDURES

Company officers will receive inspection forms for the residential occupancies. The form should be reviewed prior to conducting the inspection. If a contact phone number is provided, then an attempt should be made to set up an inspection time.

The inspection of the property is a regulatory responsibility of the Fire Department and should be conducted at a reasonable time. The inspecting company should enter the premises by the main entrance and attempt to find a responsible party (manager or owner). The officer should introduce themselves and state the nature of their business. They should request permission to inspect the premises. Consent must be granted. If the responsible party denies entry, then the officer should determine when a more reasonable time for the inspection might be and then reschedule.

If a responsible party is not available, then any tenant or occupant of the building may grant the Fire Department access for the conduction of the inspection. The areas that will be examined during the inspection are common areas of the building that are accessible to the occupants (exits, stairs, halls, lobbies, garages, exercise rooms, laundry rooms and locker rooms). In addition storage areas, mechanical rooms, trash areas, recycle areas, electrical equipment rooms, roof access and elevator equipment rooms should be inspected. Fire alarm and fire protection equipment should be evaluated. The inspection of individual dwelling units is beyond the scope of this program and is not required. If a tenant or occupant requests that the Fire Department inspect their apartment or room, the tenant should be made aware that the inspection is not mandatory. The officer is encouraged to comply with the occupant's request in the interest of promoting education and fire safety.

REASONABLE FIRE SAFETY

The intent of this inspection program is the determination of reasonable fire safety. There are ten issues that are addressed within the guidelines of the program. The first four issues are of major importance and any compromise or adverse condition must be recorded on the inspection form as well as be immediately reported to the Bureau of Fire Prevention at 558-3300 during normal business hours or 734-2106 (extension 2106 from a Mainline) at other times.

REPORTABLE TO THE BFP

Alarm System

If an alarm panel is present as part of a fire alarm system, then confirm that the system is operational. This is usually indicated by a green light or some type of descriptor on the main panel.



Alarm Panels should be inspected to confirm that the system is operational.



The presence of a trouble light does not necessarily mean that the alarm system is inoperative



A properly functioning alarm system should have a green indicator light or some type of readout that the alarm system is normal.

Visually confirm the presence of components and security of the system. The system should indicate that it is in service, the power is on and no “trouble” lights or indicators should be on the screen. Any variations from normal service indicates a deficiency from the fire code and needs to be documented on the inspection form and reported to the BFP. In addition, if the alarm system is determined to be inoperative, then an SFFD “Building Fire Alarm System Out of Service” label must be affixed to the alarm panel as well as adjacent to the main entry to the building. (2007 SFFC Section 901.7.2)



Building Fire Alarm Out of Service Label

The presence of a “trouble” light doesn’t necessarily indicate that the system is inoperative. Make an attempt to determine what the source of the trouble indicator is. There may not be an alarm panel present. The absence is not necessarily a fire code violation. Depending on the age of the building and the codes that were in effect at the time of construction or installation, there may not have been a requirement for installation of an alarm panel.

Fire alarm systems are required to be periodically tested and maintained. If a responsible party is on the premises, then the officer should inquire regarding the records of the testing. If the responsible party can not produce those records, then contact the BFP. If the system is operative and the responsible party is not on the premises, then no further action is required by the officer.

Sprinkler System

If a sprinkler system is present, then confirm that the system is pressurized. Also inspect to see that either the main shutoff is in a secured room, is locked in the open position or that tamper sensors are present. Sprinkler heads should be inspected to confirm that they are unobstructed (e.g. painters leaving tape on heads) and that all heads are in place. Sprinkler systems and standpipes are required to be certified every five years. Proof of this maintenance should take the form of a sticker that is usually found on the Fire Department Connection (FDC) or on a riser near the FDC. Any deficiency should be recorded on the inspection form and reported to the BFP. As part of the sprinkler system inspection, also examine the Fire Department Connection (FDC) to confirm that it is unobstructed and has proper covers on the inlets. Also examine any

standpipe inlets and outlets that might be present and confirm that valves, swivels and covers are operational.



Sprinkler shutoffs or control valves may have a tamper switch as is shown in the above photo; otherwise the valve should be chained and locked in an open position.



A gauge will indicate that that the sprinkler system is pressurized.

SECTION 2. INSPECTION PROCEDURES



Fire Department Connections (FDC) should have protective caps and the swivels should be functional.



Standpipe inlets should also have protective caps or covers. Remove caps to confirm the absence of obstructions and to verify that the swivels operate correctly.



Sometimes paint may interfere with the functioning of the swivel and cap removal.

The absence of a sprinkler system does not necessarily constitute a fire code violation. Depending on the age of the building and the codes that were in effect at the time of construction, a sprinkler system may not have been required.

Exits Clear

Inspect the exit path and exit doors to make sure that they are clear of storage and obstructions. Make an attempt to gain immediate compliance by instructing the responsible party if storage or obstructions can be cleared from the area. If the exit has been compromised by more permanent obstructions, record that status on the inspection form and report to the BFP. On occasion a required exit may be obstructed by non-approved building alterations.



Areas along the egress path must be kept clear of obstructions and combustible material.

Unusual Hazards

Residential occupancies are designated to be primarily used for that purpose. Any hazardous use of the occupancy is prohibited. There should not be commercial auto repair or painting on the premises. Flammable liquid storage is limited to five gallons without a permit. Any storage in excess of five gallons requires a permit issued by the SFFD. Storage of flammable or combustible liquid in excess of ten gallons must be in an approved locker.



The storage or use of five-gallon propane containers is prohibited in apartment buildings and hotels.

Five gallon propane gas containers (or larger) may not be stored in residential occupancies. Take appropriate steps to mitigate the hazard with the responsible party. If those attempts are unsuccessful, then the hazard needs to be reported. If there are any unusual hazards involving inappropriate use of the occupancy because of improper amounts or storage of hazardous materials that the officer was unable to resolve, then record that information on the inspection form and report the situation to the BFP.

TO BE HANDLED BY THE INSPECTING COMPANY:

Expired Extinguisher Inspection Tags

Fire extinguishers need to be inspected annually. Confirm that the inspection tag has not expired. Extinguishers need to be serviced whenever they have been used or if pressure has dropped below the operational zone. Any deficiency involving an expired extinguisher inspection tag is to be handled by the officer conducting the inspection. Bring the deficiency to the attention of the responsible party by completing a "Notice of Corrective Action Required" form. Document the action taken on the inspection form and conduct a follow-up inspection to confirm compliance.



Whenever an extinguisher has been discharged or has lost pressure then an inspection collar will be placed on the extinguisher when it has been recharged and serviced.

SECTION 2. INSPECTION PROCEDURES



The fire code requires that extinguishers in hotels and apartment buildings be inspected every year. An inspection tag will be attached indicating the date of the inspection.

Missing Fire Extinguishers

Every fire extinguisher cabinet or extinguisher wall mount should have a fire extinguisher present. If the extinguisher is missing, bring the deficiency to the attention of the responsible party by completing a “Notice of Corrective Action Required” form. Document the action taken on the inspection form and conduct a follow-up inspection to confirm compliance.



Confirm that extinguishers are present in extinguisher cabinets and that the inspection tag is not expired.

Exit Signs Maintained

Exit signs should clearly indicate what doors are to be used as exits. If the sign can't be read or if the sign has lights that are not functional, document that deficiency on the inspection form and bring the deficiency to the attention of the responsible party by completing a "Notice of Corrective Action Required" form. Conduct a follow-up inspection to confirm compliance.



Exit signs should be internally lit or illuminated by exterior source.

Emergency Lighting Functioning

If emergency lights are present, they are required to be operational in the event of a power failure. Some wall mounted units have self contained batteries. They may have an indicator that reports the status of the batteries or there may be a test switch. Confirm that the emergency light is operational. Document any deficiency on the inspection form and bring the deficiency to the attention of the responsible party by completing a "Notice of Corrective Action Required" form. Conduct a follow-up inspection on a later date to confirm compliance.



Indicator lights on self contained emergency light units will reveal the status of the back-up battery. Some units have a test switch.

Combustible Storage

Typically the inspecting company may encounter accumulations of ordinary combustibles in common areas, storage areas or overflowing trash areas. This is a situation where immediate compliance can be attained by removing the material from the building or securing the trash area. The officer and crew should make every attempt to correct the problem. Document the action that was taken on the inspection form. Bring the deficiency to the attention of the responsible party by completing a "Notice of Corrective Action Required" form. If a follow-up inspection is warranted to confirm continued compliance, then the officer should take the initiative to do so.



Accumulated combustible material hazards should be mitigated as soon as possible.

Clearance From Sprinkler Heads

The fire code requires that there be at least 18 inches of vertical clearance at each sprinkler head. Storage on top of shelves and cabinets should allow for that clearance. Bring any deficiency to the attention of the responsible party by completing a 'notice of Corrective Action Required' form. An effort should be made for immediate compliance, but if that is not possible the company officer should schedule a follow-up inspection to confirm that the hazardous situation has been abated. Document the action taken on the inspection form.

SECTION 2. INSPECTION PROCEDURES



Storage should be eighteen inches from sprinkler heads and twenty-four inches from the ceiling in unsprinklered areas.

Officer Responsibility:

Any deficiencies involving: expired extinguisher inspection tags, missing fire extinguishers, exit sign maintenance, emergency lighting, combustible storage and clearance from sprinkler heads are to be documented on the inspection form. A Notice of Corrective Action Required” (NCAR) is to be completed with the original left on the premises and the copy forwarded to the Bureau of Fire Prevention. There is no need to independently report the condition to the BFP. The NCAR form will suffice.

NOTICE OF CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED FORM



NOTICE OF CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

DATE: _____
Month Day Year

TO: _____
Property Owner Occupant Agent Responsible Party

The property at _____ has been inspected by the San Francisco Fire Department and one or more conditions were observed that are not in compliance with the San Francisco Fire Code. Please take action within _____ hours of the date of this notice to correct.

Allowing this condition to continue could result in the issuance of a Notice of Violation. If a Notice of Violation is issued, then reinspection fees might be assessed.

REINSPECTION OF VIOLATION FEES: (2007 SFFC Section 112.3 Appendix Chapter 1)

If an inspection by a designated officer or employee of the Fire Department discloses a violation of this code, the Chief shall determine a period of time that is reasonable to remedy the violation and reinspect the property to verify such correction. The department shall collect a minimum fee of \$180.00 to compensate for its costs to perform such reinspection to certify correction of the code violation and secure compliance with the applicable requirements. Inspections which require more than one hour to complete will be subject to an additional fee at the rate of \$22.50 for each quarter-hour increment beyond the first sixty minutes of the department's on-site review.

CONDITION REQUIRING CORRECTIVE ACTION: (Check appropriate box)

- 2007 SFFC Section 304.1 **Combustible Storage Hazard.**
- 2007 SFFC Section 315.2.1 **Ceiling Clearances Maintained.**
- 2007 SFFC Section 901.4.1 **Sprinkler System Maintenance.**
- 2007 SFFC Section 901.6 **Fire Alarm Maintenance.**
- 2007 SFFC Section 906.1 **Fire Extinguisher(s) Required.**
- 2007 SFFC Section 906.2 **Fire Extinguisher(s) Maintained.**
- 2007 SFFC Section 1004.3 **Posting of Occupant Load in Public Assemblies.**
- 2007 SFFC Section 1027.3 **Exit Sign Illumination.**
- 2007 SFFC Section 1027.5 **Emergency Lighting.**
- 2007 SFFC Section 1028.1 **Exits Maintained and Unobstructed.**
- 2007 SFFC Section 3401.1 **Flammable and Combustible Liquid Storage.**
- 2007 SFFC Section 3801.1 **LPG Storage.**
- 2007 SFFC Section 105.6.32, Appendix Chapter 1 **Permit Required for Open Flame/Candles.**
- 2007 SFFC Section 105.6.34, Appendix Chapter 1 **Permit Required for Place of Assembly.**
- 2007 SFFC Section 110.1.1, Appendix Chapter 1 **Unsafe Conditions.**
- Other _____
- Other _____
- Other _____

ISSUED BY: _____
SFFD Officer/Inspector SFFD Company/District Signature

RESPONSIBLE PARTY: _____
Print Name Signature Phone number

Original to responsible party. Copy to Bureau of Fire Prevention

Form BFPNCAR 011608

Telephone: (415) 558-3300
 Fax Nos: (415) 558-3323 or 3324

698 Second Street, Room 109
 San Francisco, CA 94107

SECTION 2. INSPECTION PROCEDURES

Notice of Corrective Action Required form back side

2007 SFFC Section 304.1 **Waste accumulation prohibited.** Combustible waste material creating a fire hazard shall not be allowed to accumulate in buildings or structures or upon premises.

2007 SFFC Section 315.2.1 **Ceiling clearance.** Storage shall be maintained 2 feet (610 mm) or more below the ceiling in nonsprinklered areas of buildings or a minimum of 18 inches (457 mm) below sprinkler head deflectors in sprinklered areas of buildings.

2007 SFFC Section 901.4.1 **Required fire protection systems. (Sprinkler System Maintenance)** Fire protection systems required by this code or the *California Building Code* shall be installed, repaired, operated, tested and maintained in accordance with this code.

2007 SFFC Section 901.6 **Inspection, testing and maintenance. (Fire Alarm Maintenance)** Fire detection, alarm and extinguishing systems shall be maintained in an **operative condition** at all times, and shall be replaced or repaired where defective. Nonrequired fire protection systems and equipment shall be inspected, tested and maintained or removed.

2007 SFFC Section 906.1 **Where required.** Portable fire **extinguishers** shall be installed in the following locations.

1. In new and existing Group A, B, E, F, H, I, M, R-1, R-2, R-4 and S occupancies.
2. Within 30 feet (9144 mm) of commercial cooking equipment.
3. In areas where flammable or combustible liquids are stored, used or dispensed.
4. On each floor of structures under construction, except Group R-3 occupancies, in accordance with Section 1415.1.

2007 SFFC Section 906.2 **General requirements.** Portable fire **extinguishers** shall be selected, installed and **maintained** in accordance with this section and *Chapter 3, Title 19 California Code of Regulations*. CCR Title 19, Section 575.1:

- (a) Fire extinguishers shall be subjected to maintenance **annually** as described in this chapter or immediately after use or when specifically indicated by an inspection or at the time of hydrostatic test. For purposes of maintenance, hydrostatic tests required during the same calendar year shall be performed at the time of the annual maintenance or recharge.
- (b) Non-rechargeable fire extinguishers shall not be recharged or hydrostatically tested but shall be discharged and removed from service at a maximum interval of 12 years from the date of manufacture.

2007 SFFC Section 1004.3 **Posting of occupant load.** Every room or space that is an assembly occupancy shall have the occupant load of the room or space posted in a conspicuous place, near the main exit or exit access doorway from the room or space. Posted signs shall be of an approved legible permanent design and shall be maintained by the owner or authorized agent.

2007 SFFC Section 1027.3 **Exit sign illumination.** Exit signs shall be internally or externally illuminated. The face of an exit sign illuminated from an external source, shall have an intensity of not less than 5 foot-candles (54 lux). Internally illuminated signs shall provide equivalent luminance and be listed for the purpose. Exception: Approved self-luminous signs that provide evenly illuminated letters shall have a minimum luminance of 0.06 foot-lamberts (0.21 cd/m²).

2007 SFFC Section 1027.5 **Illumination emergency power.** The power supply for means of egress illumination shall normally be provided by the premises' electrical supply. In the event of power supply failure, illumination shall be automatically provided from an emergency system for the following occupancies where such occupancies require two or more means of egress.

2007 SFFC Section 1028.1 **General.** The means of **egress** for buildings or portions thereof shall be **maintained** in accordance with this section.

2007 SFFC Section 1028.3 **Obstructions.** A means of **egress** shall be free from obstructions that would prevent its use.

2007 SFFC Section 3401.1 **Scope and application.** Prevention, control and mitigation of dangerous conditions related to **storage**, use, dispensing, mixing and handling of **flammable and combustible liquids** shall be in accordance with Chapter 27 and this chapter.

2007 SFFC Section 3801.1 **Scope.** Storage, handling and transportation of **liquefied petroleum gas (LP-gas)** and the installation of LP-gas equipment pertinent to systems for such uses shall comply with this chapter and NFPA 58. Properties of LP-gases shall be determined in accordance with Appendix B of NFPA 58.

2007 SFFC Appendix Chapter 1 Section 105.6.32 **Open flames and candles.** An operational **permit is required** to use open flames or candles in connection with assembly areas, dining areas of restaurants or drinking establishments.

2007 SFFC Appendix Chapter 1 Section 105.6.34 **Places of assembly.** An operational **permit is required** to operate a place of assembly.

2007 SFFC Appendix Chapter 1 Section 110.1.1 **Unsafe conditions.** Structures or existing equipment that are or hereafter become unsafe or deficient because of inadequate means of egress or which constitute a **fire hazard**, or are otherwise dangerous to human life or the public welfare, or which involve illegal or improper occupancy or inadequate maintenance, shall be deemed an unsafe condition. A vacant structure which is not secured against unauthorized entry as required by Section 311 shall be deemed unsafe.

2007 SFFC Appendix Chapter 1 Section 107.6 **Overcrowding.** Overcrowding or admittance of any person beyond the **approved capacity** of a building or a portion thereof shall not be allowed. The fire code official, upon finding any overcrowding conditions or obstructions in aisles, passageways or other means of egress, or upon finding any condition which constitutes a **life safety hazard**, shall be authorized to cause the event to be stopped until such condition or obstruction is corrected.

San Francisco Fire Department
Division of Fire Prevention and Investigation

Pending Inspection Form

BUILDING

Address								Cross St		
626 BUSH ST SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94108								CHELSEA PL		
Block	Lot	Batt.	Engine	Occu. Type	Const. Type	Year	Sq. Ft.	Height	St. Above	St. Below
0272	004B	01	02			0	0	0	0	0

OCCUPANT

DBA Name				Floor	Unit No	Insp. Area	Sq. Ft.
						21 - R1 COMPANY INSPECTION	
Primary Contact		Company			Phone		

INSPECTION

Insp. No	Inspection Type	Dist	Schd. Date	Disp.	Area	Inspector Name
31786	21 - R1 Company Inspection (E13)	01W	12/19/07		21	

Insp. Dt: _____ Start Tm: _____ End Tm: _____

Return Dt: _____

Remarks

Alarm System Functioning (In service, power on and no trouble lights present)	YES / NO
Sprinkler System Operational (Pressure in the system)	YES / NO
Exits clear (Operable from inside and clear of obstructions)	YES / NO
Clear of unusual hazards (No storage of excessive amounts of flammable liquids, gases or propane)	YES / NO

Any abnormal situation involving the above four items should be recorded on the inspection form and reported as a complaint to the Bureau of Fire Prevention at 558-3300.

APARTMENT AND HOTEL (R1 & R2) INSPECTION FORM

APARTMENT AND HOTEL (R1 & R2) INSPECTION FORM

Completing the Inspection Form

Building Address:

Confirm that the address is the address for the residential occupancy. Sometimes the business occupancy on the ground floor may be identified erroneously in this field. Make correction directly on the form.

Occupant:

If the responsible party has been identified, please add that information to the form along with a phone number.

Inspection:

- When the inspection has been completed, place a “C” in the “Disp” (Disposition) box. Enter the officer’s SFFD ID in the “Inspector Name” box.
- Indicate the day that the inspection was conducted on the “Insp. Dt” line.
- Indicate the start time and ending time on the “Start Tm” and “End Tm” lines.

Indicate the condition of reportable items to the BFP:

- Alarm System
- Sprinkler System
- Exits
- Unusual Hazards

Use the remaining space on the form to indicate any deficiencies observed and action taken regarding:

- Expired extinguisher tags
- Missing fire extinguishers
- Exit sign maintenance
- Emergency lighting
- Excessive amounts of combustible material
- Sprinkler head clearance

Completed Form:

Forward completed form to the Bureau of Fire Prevention