

Town of Chapel Hill

Fire
Department

302 North Columbia Street, Chapel Hill, NC 27516

(919) 968-2781

FIRE CODE INFORMATION FOR PUBLIC SAFETY WORKSHOP

✓ OVERCROWDING

It is a violation of law to exceed your posted capacity.

North Carolina General Statute 58-79-20 states;

"The Commissioner of Insurance, or the chief of fire department or chief of police where there is no chief of fire department, or the city or county building inspector, electrical inspector, heating inspector, or fire prevention inspector has the right at all reasonable hours, for the purpose of examination, to enter into and upon all buildings and premises in their jurisdiction. When any of such officers find in any building or upon any premises overcrowding in violation of occupancy limits established pursuant to the North Carolina State Building Code, combustible material or inflammable conditions dangerous to the safety of such building or premises they shall order the same to be removed or remedied, and this order shall be forthwith complied with by the owner or occupant of such building or premises."

Occupancy signs must be posted in a visible location.

✓ FIRE SAFETY EQUIPMENT

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Ensure that you have the required number of fire extinguishers. (The minimum required size extinguisher is 2A10:BC which is a five pound extinguisher.)

Extinguishers for kitchen use are required to be Class K.

Fire extinguishers must be mounted in locations that are visible and accessible for anyone in the event they are needed.

Fire extinguishers must be located so that no more than 75 feet of travel distance from any point is required to reach an extinguisher.

Ensure your fire extinguishers are maintained as required by fire code. (Annual service conducted by a professional)

EXIT AND EMERGENCY LIGHTING

Required exit and emergency light fixtures must be visible and in operable condition at all times.

Do not obscure fixtures with plants or other decorative items.

Lighting should be tested monthly to ensure proper operation.

Repair or replace fixtures that do not function properly.

EXITS AND EXIT ROUTES

Never lock, block or in any way impede exit routes or exits.

"Exits must be available for full and immediate use at all times while the premises is occupied," NC Fire Code Chapter 10.

Do not store combustible items under exit stairwells or in the path of travel. These items can increase the intensity of a fire and block the exit route.

Do not obscure exits and exit routes with decorative items.

KITCHEN HOOD SYSTEMS

Kitchen hood systems require service from a professional every six months. Cleaning of systems should take place regularly to prevent buildup of grease on screens, vents, extinguishing nozzles, etc. Records of service and cleaning must be maintained on the premises.

FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS

Generally, fire alarm systems require maintenance and testing annually. Some components require more frequent maintenance. It is the property owner's responsibility to properly maintain all required fire protection systems. Copies of all maintenance reports or system service reports must be forwarded to the fire marshal's office annually.

AUTOMATIC FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

Automatic fire sprinkler systems also require annual maintenance and service, although again, some components require more frequent maintenance. It is the property owner's responsibility to properly maintain required fire protection systems. Copies of all maintenance reports or system service reports must be forwarded to the fire marshal's office annually.

✓ **PYROTECHNICS**

The use of pyrotechnic devices (fireworks of any kind), whether indoor or outdoor display, is prohibited unless you have been issued a permit by the Fire Marshal's office.

✓ **THE PERMIT PROCESS**

If you wish to host a band or other form of entertainment that uses pyrotechnics as part of the act, there is an application and permit process that must be completed before this is allowed.

1. The first step is to come by the administrative offices of the Fire Department, located at 302 N. Columbia Street and complete an application. This should be done several days in advance of the date you are requesting to conduct a pyrotechnic display.
2. Once the application is completed, an inspector from the Life Safety Division will contact you to discuss the specifics for the event and establish the requirements that must be met before a permit will be issued.
3. We will require a "test shoot" of all types of pyrotechnic devices to be used in the display and help you formulate a fire safety plan for the event.
4. You are required to provide proof of insurance (1 million in liability for the display itself) and pay a \$100 permit fee.
5. There may be additional fees related to fire protection requirements while the pyrotechnic display is in progress.
6. If all requirements are satisfied, a permit for the display will be issued.

PREVENTION

- ✓ **CONDUCT ANNUAL FIRE INSPECTIONS**
- ✓ **CORRECT ALL VIOLATIONS WITHIN A REASONABLE PERIOD OF TIME**
- ✓ **MAINTAIN ALL LIFE SAFETY DEVICES (EXIT AND/OR EMERGENCY LIGHTING, FIRE DETECTION DEVICES)**
- ✓ **ENSURE THAT EXIT ACCESSES AND EXITS ARE ALWAYS FULLY USEABLE AND ACCESSIBLE. NEVER LOCK OR BLOCK YOUR EXITS.**
- ✓ **MAKE REGULAR ANNOUNCEMENTS TO NOTIFY PATRONS OF ALL EXIT LOCATIONS**
- ✓ **DEVELOP AN EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN AND CONDUCT REGULAR TRAINING WITH ALL EMPLOYEES**
- ✓ **POST EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLANS**
- ✓ **QUESTIONS? CONTACT THE LIFE SAFETY DIVISION AT 968-2781.**