



HOWE SPRINGS FIRE DISTRICT
DIVISION OF FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY

Fire Prevention Information for Businesses

COMMON FIRE CODE VIOLATIONS:

Address or Suite Number Not Posted

The address must be clearly marked, legible and visible from the street fronting the property. They must have reflective contrasting background or reflective numbers on a contrasting background.

Blocked Passageways and Exit Doors

As obvious as it seems, one of the most frequent violations of fire codes stem from leaving access routes blocked. This is particularly common in busy workplaces where deliveries are left unattended in passageways that provide a means of exit in the event of a fire. Cages, boxes and trolleys are also regularly left in front of emergency exit doors and trying to negotiate them in an emergency can have potentially life-threatening consequences.

Exit Sign Illumination

A standard light is no longer sufficient as a means of highlighting emergency exit points. All exit signs should be illuminated and placed in positions where they are easy to notice should an emergency occur.

Fire Doors

Fire doors serve a distinct purpose in the event of a fire and can help to contain heat and smoke. Leaving fire doors wedged open to promote easy access or exit points to a building is prohibited. They may only be held open by an approved device and should be kept closed at all other times.

Self-Closing Devices

All fire doors must be fitted with a suitable self-closing device and these must be regularly maintained to ensure they are in good working order.

Panel Box Clearances

Electrical panel boxes of any type must have a working space of not less than 30 inches in width, 36 inches in depth and 78 inches in height shall be provided in front of electrical service equipment. Where the electrical service equipment is wider than 30 inches, the working space shall not be less than the width of the equipment. Placing furniture, equipment or any other obstruction in access areas to electrical sources is another common fire code violation that can be easily remedied with due care and attention.

Covered Electrical Outlets

Any electrical outlet must remain covered. This applies to junction boxes, circuit breaker panels and any type of outlet box.

Extension Cords

Perhaps the biggest fire code violation of all is the use of extension cords. These can only be used on a temporary basis and must not be installed for permanent use. Extension cords shall not be affixed to structures, extended through walls, ceilings or floors, or under doors or floor coverings, nor shall such cords be subject to environmental damage or physical impact.

Hydrants Obstruction

The fire hydrant must be visible and accessible at all times, with three feet clearance on all sides and no parking within 10 feet.

Fire Extinguishers

All fire extinguishers in a building or place of work should be regularly maintained. Minimal knowledge is necessary to perform a monthly "quick check" or inspection. A person licensed through the state of South Carolina shall service the fire extinguishers no more than 1 year apart. Even the single use of a water fire extinguisher will need replenishment.

Smoke Detectors

Smoke detectors provide another common fire code violation. Homeowners and businesses are obliged to keep all smoke detectors maintained and in full working order.

Fire Alarms

All alarm systems must undergo an annual inspection and suitable records of action must be kept. These tests can include, but are not exclusive to, alarm boxes, batteries and sound devices.

Fire sprinkler systems

Sprinkler systems shall be serviced and tested annually by a licensed fire protection contractor and inspected quarterly.

Hood Systems Service

Fire suppression systems for commercial cooking operations must be serviced and tested at every six months by a licensed fire protection contractor.

Hood Systems Cleaning

Hoods, grease-removal devices, fans, ducts and other appurtenances shall be cleaned at intervals necessary to prevent the accumulation of grease. Cleanings shall be recorded, and records shall state the extent, time and date of cleaning. Such records shall be maintained on the premises.