

CITY OF SPRINGFIELD FIRE DEPARTMENT

25 Most Common Fire Code Violations

A Reference for The City of Springfield
Business Community



“The goal of the Springfield Fire Department’s Fire Code Enforcement Program is to ensure a fire safe community for our neighbors and our friends visiting our community.”

– Fire Chief D. Pennington

This list of the 25 most common fire code violations can assist in eliminating potential fire hazards in businesses and staying in compliance with adopted fire codes. The Springfield Fire Department operates under the 2018 International Fire Code as adopted by City of Springfield.

- 1. Addressing.** Numbers shall be provided for all new and existing buildings in such a position as to be plainly visible and legible from the street or road fronting the property. Numbers shall be a minimum of 4” high, with a contrasting background. (IFC 505.1)
- 2. Combustibles too close to the Ceiling.** In building with sprinklers, combustibles are to be at least 18” below sprinkler heads. In buildings without sprinklers, the minimum distance to the ceiling is 24”. Also, do not store combustibles under unprotected stairways. (IFC 315.3.1)
- 3. Combustibles too close to Heat Producing Devices.** Combustibles are to be at least 2 feet from appliances and at least 6” from baseboard heaters. Appliances include, but are not limited to furnaces, water heaters, and portable heaters. (IFC 305.1)
- 4. Commercial Cooking Hood and Duct 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. Records shall be kept on the premises. High volume cooking requires a 3 month inspection; all other cooking operations should be inspected every 6 months. (IFC 607)
- 5. Commercial Cooking Hood and Duct Extinguishing System.** Dry and Wet Chemical systems shall be inspected and tested for proper operation at 6 month intervals. Clean agent systems shall be inspected and tested at 12 month intervals. (IFC 904)
- 6. Fire Lanes.** Where required fire lanes must be properly marked and shall not be obstructed. (IFC 503.3)
- 7. Electrical Panels.** Electrical panels shall be easily accessible and combustible materials shall not be stored within 3 feet. The working space shall not be less than the width of the panel. Cover holes in electrical panels with blank plastic covers. Do not place tape over circuit breakers. Electrical rooms shall be identified. (IFC 604)
- 8. Emergency Lights.** The bulb or bulbs must be lit when the test button is pushed. If the light(s) do not work, the battery may need to be replaced. (IFC 1008)
- 9. Exit Signs.** Many exit signs are equipped with battery back-up in case of loss of power. Push the test button to check if the battery and D/C lights are operating. If not, it is probably the battery that needs replacing and not the bulbs. All bulbs need to function. (IFC 1013)
- 10. Obstructed Exits.** Exit aisles and discharges for the public shall be free of obstructions and not less than 36” in width. (IFC 1009)
- 11. Fire-rated Doors.** These self-closing doors shall not be blocked open, obstructed, nor made inoperable. (IFC 1010)
- 12. Extension Cords.** Extension cords are for temporary use only and are not to be used in lieu of permanent wiring. Extension cords cannot pass through doorways, walls, floors, or ceilings, nor under floor coverings unless protected in conduit. Extension cords shall be used only with portable appliances and grounded. Extension cords shall show no signs of damage and shall not be plugged into each other. (IFC 604.5)
- 13. Extinguishers.** Annual service must be performed by a licensed fire extinguisher contractor. Most businesses need a minimum 2A:10B:C fire extinguisher placed within 75 feet of travel distance. Extinguishers need to be mounted in a highly visible and accessible location. (IFC 906)

- 14. Fire Alarm Systems.** Fire alarm systems shall be serviced annually and the Fire Alarm Control Unit shall be easily accessible. (IFC 907.8)
- 15. Fire Sprinkler Systems.** Fire sprinkler systems shall be serviced annually. Maintain a clear access to the riser and do not store items within 3 feet of the riser system. A sprinkler head cabinet needs to be mounted next to the riser, containing a sprinkler head wrench and a minimum of 6 spare sprinkler heads. (IFC 901.6)
- 16. Key Box.** If there is a key box, also known as a Knox Box, for the business, provide a working master key. These boxes are available for purchase by contacting the Springfield Fire Department. (IFC 506.1)
- 17. Open Junction Box.** Open junction boxes and open-wiring splices are prohibited. Approved covers shall be provided for all switch and electrical outlet boxes. (IFC 604.6)
- 18. Piggy-back Surge Protectors.** Surge protectors shall be equipped with over-current protection and must be plugged into an outlet, not extension cords or other surge protectors. (IFC 604.4)
- 19. Pressurized Cylinders.** Cylinders or tanks, whether empty or full, need to be chained/secured in such a way so they cannot tip over. (IFC 5303.5.3)
- 20. Signage.** On doors to sprinkler riser rooms or to the fire alarm panel, signage clearly indicating the presence of the systems within are to be visible. (IFC 509.1)
- 21. Sprinkler Heads.** There is to be a minimum of 18" clearance around sprinkler heads. (IFC 315.3.1)
- 22. Storage in Equipment/Electrical Rooms.** Combustible material shall not be stored in boiler rooms, mechanical rooms, elevator rooms, or electrical equipment rooms. (IFC 315.3.3)
- 23. Bolt locks.** Manually operated flush bolts or surface bolts are not permitted. (IFC 1010.1.9.5)
- 24. Unprotected Ceilings.** Keep ceiling tiles in place or replace when damaged. Seal all holes in ceilings and walls and keep attic-access lids in place. (IFC 703.1)
- 25. Waste Accumulation.** Combustible waste material, creating a fire hazard, shall not be allowed to accumulate in buildings or structures or upon premises. (IFC 304.1)

For additional information, clarification or assistance, please contact the Springfield Fire Department's Bureau of Fire Prevention at (417)874-2300 or by email at sfdCRR@springfieldmo.gov.





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