

COMMERCIAL FIRE INSPECTIONS

This information is distributed to business owners to provide a general overview of the North Cowichan fire inspection process, including additional information for businesses with special hazards as defined in the British Columbia Fire Code.

Fire Inspection Process

As required by the *Fire Services Act*, North Cowichan Inspectors will visit your business to perform a fire safety inspection to ensure your business meets the BC Fire Code.

These inspections occur during regular business hours. The Inspectors will be able to answer your questions about fire safety related to your business.

Did you know? Business owners are responsible for complying with the BC Fire Code. If you are not sure how to comply, please seek professional advice.

ROUTINE INSPECTION

This inspection is conducted as a part of a regular system of inspections and will be completed by an inspector when required.

Inspectors will check that:

- Fire and life safety systems have been inspected, tested and maintained, and
- Business operations meet the BC Fire Code.

If your business meets the BC Fire Code, no further action is required until your next inspection. If your business does not comply:

- You will receive an Order to Comply with a timeline to correct the deficiencies.
- A re-inspection may be required.

RE-INSPECTION

Re-inspections may take place based on details in the Order to Comply.

To achieve compliance, all deficiencies in the Order to Comply must be resolved, and your business must meet the BC Fire Code prior to the re-inspection.

Top Six Fire Code Violations

- 1 Emergency lighting missing or improperly installed/maintained
- 2 Portable fire extinguishers missing or not working/maintained
- 3 Exit passages blocked
- 4 Exit signs missing or not working/ maintained
- 5 Fire separations missing or damaged
- 6 Fire safety plan missing or incomplete

! Special Hazards

The BC Fire Code has additional requirements for:

- Indoor and outdoor storage of combustible products and dangerous goods.
- Storage, handling, use and processing of flammable liquids and combustible liquid.
- Hazardous processes and operations.

See next page for more information if any of these apply to your business.

Avoid a potential re-inspection

Prepare for your routine inspection – visit the Fire Inspection Guidelines page at northcowichan.ca

If you have any questions about inspections or special hazards, contact:

North Cowichan Fire Department 250.746.3107 | fire@northcowichan.ca

NORTH
Cowichan



! Does your business have a special hazard?

If your business contains or involves one of these special hazards, it should be addressed prior to establishing your business by consulting a professional to advise you on what is required to comply with the BC Fire Code.

Dangerous Goods

Dangerous goods have properties that can be harmful if not stored and used properly.

If your business will store or handle any of the dangerous goods to the right, additional BC Fire Code regulations may apply.

Examples

- Explosives
- Compressed gas cylinders
- Flammable liquids
- Combustible liquids
- Flammable solids
- Oxidizers
- Poisonous materials
- Radioactive materials
- Corrosive materials
- Miscellaneous dangerous goods
- Aerosols with a flammable product – exceeding 1 pallet

Processes and Operations

Certain types of business processes and operations have higher levels of risk and therefore must meet additional requirements in the BC Fire Code.

You may need to modify your building, fire protection system, process or operation if your business conducts any of the examples to the right.

Examples

- Hot work processes that involve open flames or producing heat or sparks
- Dust-producing processes, including workshops
- Processes involving flammable or combustible liquids, including spray operations
- Industrial ventilation – for dusts, flammable vapours, etc.
- Laboratory
- Commercial cooking equipment
- Special effects (e.g. pyrotechnics)

Storage, Manufacture or Processing

Your building may require an additional level of fire protection if your business operations involve the manufacturing, processing or storage of certain products, such as those to the right.

Examples

- Outdoor storage, such as shipping containers, pallets, plastics, tires - within 15 m of any building or property line
- Industrial trucks
- Indoor tire or plastic storage – exceeding 1.5 m in height
- Aerosol products
- Combustible fibres – indoor storage exceeding 3 m³ of material
- Ammonium nitrate – exceeding 1000 kg
- Indoor storage – exceeding 2.5 m in height

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