

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR FIRE SAFETY INSPECTIONS**

The following policies and procedures are to be used for fire safety inspections within the Western Reserve Joint Fire District by all certified fire safety inspectors.

### **I. Codes**

The Western Reserve Joint Fire District Inspectors shall enforce the following codes;

- A. Ohio Revised Code
- B. Ohio Fire Code/ Ohio Administrative Code
- C. Ohio Building Code
- D. Western Reserve Joint Fire District Fire Prevention Code (2003 IFC).

### **II. Inspection Priorities**

Buildings shall be inspected based upon the following priorities:

- A. Potential risk of death or serious injury to persons.
- B. Potential risk of significant damage to property.

Generally, schools, daycare centers, nursing homes, assisted living centers, churches, apartment buildings, and large commercial, multiple occupancy structures shall have priority over other structures. A request for an inspection relating to an initial occupancy permit shall also be promptly addressed.

### **III. Scheduling Inspection**

The Officer in Charge (O.I.C.) of the Inspection Bureau shall identify buildings to be inspected, and shall maintain an active list of all such buildings in order for inspectors to be assigned or to self-select a building to inspect. A list of buildings to be inspected shall be posted in the Inspector's office for all Inspectors.

Days scheduled for inspection will be coordinated by the O.I.C. of the Bureau, and will be, whenever possible, listed on the monthly department calendar.

### **IV. Action by Inspectors**

- A. First Visit. Generally, an inspector will gather pre-plan information and will make general contact with a business owner/occupant if an inspection has not been conducted on the premises within the previous two years. The Inspector will notify the occupant/owner that a formal inspection will take place within ninety (90) days. The Inspector may also notify the occupant/owner of any deficiencies observed during the initial visit.
- B. Formal Inspection. Once the District has information regarding a business in its inspection file, a formal inspection shall take place. The results of the inspection shall be documented and placed in the file. Inspections shall include those areas of the various codes which are applicable to the occupancy.

C. Follow-up Inspection. If any recommendations or orders have been issued to the building occupant/owner, a follow-up inspection shall be scheduled within sixty (60) days, dependent upon the seriousness of the condition or violation found. A specific date for a follow-up shall be set, and kept by the Inspector. The Inspector who originally issued the recommendation, or notice of violation, should conduct the follow-up inspection(s). If the Inspector conducting the original inspection cannot re-inspect on the date scheduled, he or she shall be responsible for scheduling a replacement.

Nothing in this section prohibits an Inspector from issuing a notice of violation order requiring the abatement of a hazard. When an immediate and significant risk to the safety of persons or property exists. The O.I.C. of the Bureau and Fire Chief shall be promptly notified of such conditions found and of the action required of the occupant/owner.

**V. Inspection Documentation**

All Inspectors shall document their actions, and all files within the Inspection office shall be maintained. (Inspection files shall be organized by street address.)

A partial list and description of the inspection forms to be utilized by Inspectors is attached to this policy as Exhibit A.

Additionally, all Inspectors shall sign the Bureau's log book, setting forth the date, the location inspected, the activity conducted, and any follow-up required by Inspectors at the location.

**VI. Uniforms for Inspectors**

All Inspectors shall conduct inspections while in a Class B uniform. The Class B uniform generally includes a light blue or white shirt, dark blue tie, badge, dark blue pants, black belt with silver or gold buckle, blue socks, and black shoes. Baseball caps shall not be worn. A Class A Uniform hat may be worn with an appropriate jacket. (See the District's Uniform Policy for more specific details.) When the inspection will involve areas of the premises on structure that are in poor condition, are extremely dirty, or which may cause damage to the uniform, class C golf shirts may be worn. If possible, jeans should be avoided.

**VII. Plan Review**

The Poland Township Zoning, Poland Village Zoning and Mahoning County Building/Inspection Departments shall be requested to provide Fire Department plan review forms to all permit applicants. These Districts plan review forms will notify all permit applicants that building plans must be submitted to the District, and that the District's attached plan review form must be completed prior to the plan review and approved by District's Inspectors.

When building plans are submitted to the District with the completed plan review form attached, the plans shall be logged in by the District Secretary. The building

plans and the plan review form shall be placed in the building. A copy of the form shall be posted. Copies of the form shall be placed in each Inspector's box.

Inspectors shall have at least 14 days to review plans. All plans shall be reviewed at a scheduled Inspector meeting. An exception to these requirements shall be made only in exceptional circumstances, with approval of the Fire Chief. Plan reviews shall follow guidelines (forms) utilized for such purpose by the Inspection Division. Owners/Builders shall be notified of any deficiencies.

Submitted plans shall be utilized when conducting site inspections.

### **VIII. Compensation**

Inspectors may be compensated for their work. (See the District's Compensation Policy for more details.) All work and the hours spent for such shall be appropriately documented and turned into the District office.

### **IX. Use of Vehicles**

- A. Single Inspector – An Inspector working alone may use his or her personal vehicle or Squad for inspections.
- B. Two Inspectors – Two Inspectors working together may use a squad when an Inspector is EMS certified and both Inspectors will be able to respond to any EMS call which may occur. (There will be no delays, appointments for meetings have not been made, etc.)
- C. Three or more Inspectors – When three or more Inspectors are inspecting buildings, they may use a squad, or engine. Again, if a squad or engine are utilized for inspections, inspectors must be able to immediately respond to any call.

### **X. Firefighters Assistance on Inspection**

Firefighters may accompany the inspectors on any inspection. They should be properly attired. Firefighters may be compensated, however, on a limited basis in accordance with the District's Compensation Policy. Prior approval by the Chief for compensation is required.

### **XI. Review of Preplan Inspection Information**

Whenever an unusual circumstance or situation is found within any building, or whenever any hazard to person or property is discovered, the District Fire Chief and officers shall be notified. Information shall be provided to all officers regarding the status of inspections during the monthly officer's meeting. Recommendations for training and building familiarization shall be made to station officers and to the Department training officer in order for drills to be planned.