

# FIRE SAFETY INSPECTIONS:

Protect Lives,  
Livelihoods and  
Property



East Chicago Fire  
Prevention Bureau

Pre-inspection fire  
code compliance  
guidelines

East Chicago Fire Department  
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East Chicago, IN 46312



As a business owner or operator in East Chicago you have invested your hard work, time, and money. You can help yourself by keeping your investment safe. Identifying and correcting fire code violations reduces the risk of injury or death from fire and also ensures that people can safely exit your place of business in the event of any kind of incident. **Help protect your business from potential costly damage, loss of income, lawsuits, fines and penalties and any type of the many potential losses that could occur from non compliance with fire and safety codes.**

Dear owner or manager:

Please use this checklist to help prepare you for some of the things that we will be looking for during a fire inspection. Where possible, please correct these items before your upcoming inspection so that interruptions to your business are limited. Most violations identified by fire inspections are minor and can be easily repaired or abated before inspectors arrive. This guide identifies some frequently occurring issues and can help make your business safe for you, your employees and your customers.

Thank You

The East Chicago Fire Department conducts inspections in accordance with the State of Indiana fire codes and the City of East Chicago ordinances. Some items listed here may not apply to your business. Other codes and regulations not listed here may apply. These are some of the items inspectors will look for when performing an inspection:

## Outside:

- The building address must be visible from the street.
- Knox key box for buildings equipped with a fire alarm or sprinkler system.
- Fire lanes must be marked and kept clear.
- Fire department sprinkler or standpipe connections kept visible and unobstructed.
- Gas meters must be protected from damage by vehicles.
- Dumpsters must be at least 5 feet from combustible walls, doors, windows, overhangs.

## Exits:

- Exit doors used by patrons or employees cannot be locked from the inside during business hours.
- Occupant load signs provided by the fire department posted in required places.
- Exit doors cannot be physically or visually obstructed.
- Illuminated exit signs with backup power installed and functioning properly.
- Emergency lighting installed in proper areas.
- Fire doors cannot be blocked open or impaired in any way from closing properly.
- Fire safety and evacuation information posted in required occupancies.

## Housekeeping:

- Combustible materials cannot be stored in boiler rooms, mechanical rooms or electrical rooms.
- Storage cannot be less than 24" from ceilings or 18" from sprinkler heads.
- Gas operated equipment cannot be stored or used within any building not classified for such use.
- Gas cans must be of approved type. More than 10 gallons must be stored in an

- approved flammable liquid storage cabinet.
- Compressed gas cylinders must be secured from falling and have protective caps installed.
- Combustible waste materials cannot be allowed to accumulate.
- Proper clearance maintained between heat or flame producing sources and combustible materials.

## Fire Protection:

- Fire alarms systems, sprinkler systems, and standpipe systems must be properly inspected by a qualified person on the required periodic basis.
- Sprinkler heads cannot be obstructed, covered, painted, or otherwise impaired from functioning.
- Records of all inspection, repair, and maintenance of fire protection systems must be kept available on premises.
- Fire extinguishers must be checked and tagged by a qualified person on an annual basis.
- Fire extinguishers must be mounted on a wall in a proper location and be no more than 5' high.
- Access to fire extinguishers cannot be visually or physically obstructed.
- Smoke and Carbon Monoxide detectors must be installed in proper locations and maintained.

## Restaurants and Commercial Cooking:

- Kitchen hood fire suppression systems are required to be serviced by qualified personnel every 6 months.
- Kitchen hoods and all duct work must be cleaned in order to be kept free from grease accumulation.
- Records of all servicing, repair, maintenance

and cleaning of hood systems must be kept on premises.

- A class K fire extinguisher must be located within 30' of any equipment using cooking oil.

## Electrical:

- Multi-plug adaptors are not permitted. (Plug strips with over current protection are permitted)
- Plug strips must be plugged directly into receptacles with no extension cords.
- Plug strips and extension cords cannot be ran through windows, doorways, under carpeting, through floors or walls or where they would be subject to any kind of damage.
- Extension cords cannot be used in place of permanent wiring.
- Proper covers must be on junction boxes, switches, outlets, and any electrical equipment.
- A clearance of 36" must be maintained in front of any electrical breaker or service panels.

## Heat Producing Appliances:

- Portable electric space heaters must be plugged directly into receptacles and be at least 3' from combustible materials.
- Portable electric space heater must have tip-over protection and used only in listed areas.
- Portable fuel-fired heating appliances cannot be used in any occupancy other than single family residences.
- Chimneys, flues, and smokestacks must be maintained so as not to create a fire hazard or permit smoke or gases to be discharged into the building.