

## **Common Fire Codes for Lodging (Vacation Rental) Homes**

### **EXTERIOR:**

#### **Address identification**

New and existing buildings shall have approved address numbers, building numbers or approved building identification placed in a position that is plainly legible and visible from the street or road fronting the property. These numbers shall contrast with their background. Address numbers shall be Arabic numbers or alphabetical letters. Numbers shall be a minimum of 4 inches (101.6 mm) high with a minimum stroke width of 0.5 inch (12.7 mm). Where access is by means of a private road and the building cannot be viewed from the public way, a monument, pole or other sign or means shall be used to identify the structure.

#### **Excessive waste/trash**

*Waste accumulation prohibited:* Combustible waste material creating a fire hazard shall not be allowed to accumulate in buildings or structures or upon premises.

*Waste material:* Accumulations of wastepaper, wood, hay, straw, weeds, litter or combustible or flammable waste or rubbish of any type shall not be permitted to remain on a roof or in any court, yard, vacant lot, alley, parking lot, open space, or beneath a grandstand, bleacher, pier, wharf, manufactured home, recreational vehicle or other similar structure.

### **EXITING:**

#### **Obstructions**

A means of egress shall be free from obstructions that would prevent its use, including the accumulation of snow and ice.

#### **Hardware/Locks**

Door handles, pulls, latches, locks and other operating devices on doors required to be accessible by Chapter 11 of the International Building Code shall not require tight grasping, tight pinching or twisting of the wrist to operate. Exit doors shall not be locked, chained, bolted, barred, latched, or otherwise rendered unusable. All locking devices shall be of an approved type.

#### **Escape/Rescue Windows**

*General requirements:* Basements and sleeping rooms below the fourth story above grade plane shall have at least one exterior emergency escape and rescue opening in accordance with this section. Where basements contain one or more sleeping rooms, emergency escape and rescue openings shall be required in each sleeping room.

*Minimum size:* Emergency escape and rescue openings shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5.7 square feet (0.53 m<sup>2</sup>).

Exception: The minimum net clear opening for emergency escape and rescue grade-floor openings shall be 5 square feet (0.46 m<sup>2</sup>).

*Minimum dimensions:* The minimum net clear opening height dimension shall be 24 inches (610 mm). The minimum net clear opening width dimension shall be 20 inches (508 mm). The net clear opening dimensions shall be the result of normal operation of the opening.

*Maximum height from floor:* Emergency escape and rescue openings shall have the bottom of the clear opening not greater than 44 inches (1118 mm) measured from the floor.

### **ELECTRICAL HAZARDS:**

#### **Abatement of electrical hazards**

Identified electrical hazards shall be abated. Identified hazardous electrical conditions in permanent wiring shall be brought to the attention of the responsible code official. Electrical wiring, devices, appliances and other equipment that is modified or damaged and constitutes an electrical shock or fire hazard shall not be used.

#### **Extension cords**

Extension cords and flexible cords shall not be a substitute for permanent wiring. Extension cords and flexible 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.

#### **Extension cords**

Portable, electric space heaters shall not be plugged into extension cords.

#### **Working space and clearance**

A working space of not less than 30 inches (762 mm) in width, 36 inches (914 mm) in depth and 78 inches (1981 mm) in height shall be provided in front of electrical service equipment. Where the electrical service equipment is wider than 30 inches (762 mm), the working space shall not be less than the width of the equipment. No storage of any materials shall be located within the designated working space.

### **DETECTORS:**

Landlord to maintain premises -- agreement that tenant perform duties -- limitation of landlord's liability for failure of smoke detector or carbon monoxide detector.

Installed in each dwelling unit under the landlord's control shall be an approved carbon monoxide detector, in accordance with rules adopted by the department of labor and industry, and an approved smoke detector, in accordance with rules adopted by the department of justice. Upon commencement of a rental agreement, the landlord shall verify that the carbon monoxide detector and the smoke detector in the dwelling unit are in good working order.

Single- or multiple-station smoke alarms shall be installed in all of the following locations:

1. In sleeping areas.
2. In every room in the path of the means of egress from the sleeping area to the door leading from the sleeping unit

3. In each story within the sleeping unit, including basements. For sleeping units with split levels and without an intervening door between the adjacent levels, a smoke alarm installed on the upper level shall suffice for the adjacent lower level provided that the lower level is less than one full story below the upper level.

### **FIRE EXTINGUISHERS:**

#### **General requirements**

Portable fire extinguishers shall be selected, installed and maintained in accordance with this section and NFPA 10.

#### **Unobstructed and unobscured**

Portable fire extinguishers shall not be obstructed or obscured from view. In rooms or areas in which visual obstruction cannot be completely avoided, means shall be provided to indicate the locations of extinguishers.

#### **Extinguishers weighing 40 pounds or less**

Portable fire extinguishers having a gross weight not exceeding 40 pounds (18 kg) shall be installed so that their tops are not more than 5 feet (1524 mm) above the floor.

#### **Floor clearance**

The clearance between the floor and the bottom of installed hand-held portable fire extinguishers shall not be less than 4 inches (102 mm).

### **FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS:**

#### **Clear means of egress**

Storage of any liquids, including stock for sale, shall not be stored near or be allowed to obstruct physically the route of egress.

#### **Liquids for maintenance and operation of equipment**

In all occupancies, quantities of flammable and combustible liquids in excess of 10 gallons (38 L) used for maintenance purposes and the operation of equipment shall be stored in liquid storage cabinets in accordance with Section 3404.3.2. Quantities not exceeding 10 gallons (38 L) are allowed to be stored outside of a cabinet when in approved containers located in private garages or other approved locations.

### **HEAT PRODUCING APPLIANCES:**

#### **Clearance from ignition sources**

Clearance between ignition sources, such as luminaires, heaters, flame-producing devices and combustible materials, shall be maintained in an approved manner.

## **Equipment rooms**

Combustible material shall not be stored in boiler rooms, mechanical rooms or electrical equipment rooms.

## **Heating appliance installation and maintenance**

Heating appliances shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, the International Building Code , the International Mechanical Code , the International Fuel Gas Code and NFPA 70.

## **Chimneys and appliances**

Chimneys, incinerators, smokestacks or similar devices for conveying smoke or hot gases to the outer air and the stoves, furnaces, fireboxes or boilers to which such devices are connected, shall be maintained so as not to create a fire hazard.

## **Masonry chimneys**

Masonry chimneys that, upon inspection, are found to be without a flue liner and that have open mortar joints which will permit smoke or gases to be discharged into the building, or which are cracked as to be dangerous, shall be repaired or relined with a listed chimney liner system installed in accordance with the manufacturer's installation instructions or a flue lining system installed in accordance with the requirements of the International Building Code and appropriate for the intended class of chimney service.

## **Metal chimneys**

Metal chimneys which are corroded or improperly supported shall be repaired or replaced.

## **Decorative shrouds**

Decorative shrouds installed at the termination of factory-built chimneys shall be removed except where such shrouds are listed and labeled for use with the specific factory-built chimney system and are installed in accordance with the chimney manufacturer's installation instructions.

## **Factory-built chimneys**

Existing factory-built chimneys that are damaged, corroded or improperly supported shall be repaired or replaced.

## **Connectors**

Existing chimney and vent connectors that are damaged, corroded or improperly supported shall be repaired or replaced.

## **HOUSEKEEPING:**

### **Storage in buildings**

Storage of combustible materials in buildings shall be orderly. Storage shall be separated from heaters or heating devices by distance or shielding so that ignition cannot occur.

## **Ceiling clearance**

Storage shall be maintained 2 feet (610 mm) or more below the ceiling in nonsprinklered areas of buildings or a minimum of 18 inches (457 mm) below sprinkler head deflectors in sprinklered areas of buildings.

## **Attic, under-floor and concealed spaces**

Attic, under-floor and concealed spaces used for storage of combustible materials shall be protected on the storage side as required for 1-hour fire-resistance-rated construction. Openings shall be protected by assemblies that are self-closing and are of noncombustible construction or solid wood core not less than 13/4 inches (44.5 mm) in thickness. Storage shall not be placed on exposed joists.

Exceptions:

1. Areas protected by approved automatic sprinkler systems.
2. Group R-3 and Group U occupancies.

## **FIRE-RESISTANCE-RATED CONSTRUCTION:**

### **Maintenance**

The required fire-resistance rating of fire-resistance-rated construction (including walls, firestops, shaft enclosures, partitions, smoke barriers, floors, fire-resistive coatings and sprayed fire-resistant materials applied to structural members and fire-resistant joint systems) shall be maintained. Such elements shall be visually inspected by the owner annually and properly repaired, restored or replaced when damaged, altered, breached or penetrated. Where concealed, such elements shall not be required to be visually inspected by the owner unless the concealed space is accessible by the removal or movement of a panel, access door, ceiling tile or similar movable entry to the space. Openings made therein for the passage of pipes, electrical conduit, wires, ducts, air transfer openings and holes made for any reason shall be protected with approved methods capable of resisting the passage of smoke and fire. Openings through fire-resistance-rated assemblies shall be protected by self- or automatic-closing doors of approved construction meeting the fire protection requirements for the assembly.

### **Added suggestions:**

**Emergency evacuation plans posted by sleeping areas.**

**Working telephone with emergency contacts posted.**

**Log kept for monthly smoke detector test.**