

CODE ENFORCEMENT

FIRE CODE INSPECTIONS

Every Connecticut town and city is required to have a certified Fire Marshal who enforces the Connecticut Fire Safety Code, and all applicable standards and regulations as they apply to commercial buildings in their community. The Fire Safety Code applies to all occupancies, both new and existing, with the exception of one and two-family homes. One and two-family homes are governed by the Connecticut State Building Code, which is enforced locally by the town or city's Building Official.

The Fire Safety Code covers items, such as exiting of buildings, fire separations, interior finishes, sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems, and many other items most people do not even recognize when entering a facility that is open to the public, or take for granted if they are noticed. These details of a building are so vital to the safety of the occupants of commercial buildings, the Connecticut General Statutes has its own chapter stating penalties for violations to the Connecticut Fire Safety Code, which can range from imposed fines to imprisonment.

FIRE CODE INSPECTION PROCESS

Although an inspection can range from hours to days in duration, once the on-site inspection is complete, the Fire Marshal or Deputy Fire Marshal must complete a detailed report describing the conditions found and actions taken.

When a violation is found during an inspection, the Fire Marshal or his designee must issue what is known as an "Abatement of Hazards" notice. This notice is to legally inform the owner, occupant, and/or management of a facility that a violation was found during an inspection. The notice further will inform the receiver that they have thirty (30) days (unless otherwise noted on the inspection report) from the day the notice is received to correct all violations contained in the inspection report that accompanies every Abatement notice. The inspection report takes as long, if not longer, than the actual inspection, to generate. The personnel conducting the inspection must return to the Fire Marshal's Office and research the Connecticut Fire Safety

Code, and all the applicable standards, to ensure the violation is properly cited.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

There are many different types of facilities that use hazardous materials. Whether they are used in a process, or are manufactured locally, hazardous materials are everywhere! The Fire Marshal's Office inspects all facilities that use hazardous materials. The purpose for the inspection is to check the manner in which the materials are being stored, the process in which they are being used, and to provide pre-incident planning information to the volunteer fire department's first responders in the event of an emergency.

PROFESSIONAL FIREWORKS AND DISCHARGE ZONES

Everyone enjoys a beautiful professional fireworks display. There are many steps that must be taken to provide a safe working environment for the artists, or "shooters" who provide the show, which guarantees a quality fireworks show! The first step is for the licensed fireworks shooter to obtain a permit to create a display. The permit is received from the State of Connecticut Department of Public Safety, Office of the State Fire Marshal. A site inspection is conducted by the Fire Marshal of the location where the actual show will take place. What the Fire Marshal is looking for is proper safe distances from the point of discharge to the closest spectator. Once the shooter obtains the permit, it must be signed by the local Fire Marshal, Police Chief, and Fire Chief. Once all the paperwork is cleared through the State Fire Marshal's Office, that's when all the hard work begins. The Fire Marshal or his designee must be on site to check pyrotechnics licenses of all the shooters on site, and while the racks which contain the tubes that launch the fireworks into the air are set up by the shooter and his/her team. In addition to the Fire Marshal, a stand-by crew from the local fire department must be present, just to be prepared in the unlikely event that an accident occurs. Once the show begins, the Fire Marshal remains in the discharge site to ensure that no spectators are within the discharge zone, and to maintain safety within the site. Upon completion of the display, the racks are checked for "dud" fireworks. Once the racks are cleared, the show is over!

TRANSPORTATION OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

As you travel throughout the State, you see various types and sized vehicles transporting materials that we use in our day-to-day operations. Those materials can range from bulk transportation of flour or baking goods, to the large tankers that haul gasoline or diesel fuel to your local gas station. Each vehicle that transports hazardous materials is required to be inspected at least once a year by the Fire Marshal in the town or city in which the vehicle is registered. These inspections are conducted to ensure the product in which the vehicle is transporting is stored in a safe manner, and to reduce the opportunity for an accidental release of hazardous materials.

UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK REMOVAL INSPECTIONS

Although underground storage tank removal inspections are not mandated by the Connecticut General Statutes, the staff of the Fire Marshal's Office in Orange inspects the removal of all underground storage tanks, in both commercial and residential settings. The homeowner or business owner, or the company in which they employ to remove the tank from their property, must submit an application for removal of an underground storage tank to the Fire Marshal's Office. Once the application is received, this generates an inspection by the Fire Marshal's Office staff. The inspection includes witnessing the actual removal of the underground tank, inspection of the tank excavation for contaminated soil, and the procurement of a soil sample by the removal contractor for analytical testing. The entire process is documented by digital photographs taken during the removal. The photographs include pictures of the tank, the tank excavation, and general photograph indicating the location of the tank on the property.

FUEL BURNING EQUIPMENT INSTALLATIONS

The installation of any fuel burning equipment requires a permit from both the Fire Marshal's Office and the Building Department. Once a permit is submitted, a review of the equipment and piping to be installed is conducted to ensure it is being installed in compliance with the appropriate codes, as

well is the equipment's listing. Once the review of the plans is completed, a field inspection is then conducted to ensure all equipment has been installed in accordance with the plans submitted. During the inspection, the Fire Marshal or his Deputy will check for proper clearance from ignitions sources, proper product containment (if required), and many other requirements, which are dependant upon the regulations that apply.