



# Barstow Fire Protection District

(A Subsidiary district of the City of Barstow)

COURTESY DUTY LOYALTY



## Frequently Asked Questions Including Inspection topics Multi-Family Residential Fire and Life Safety Program

### - Why is my apartment building being inspected?

State mandates require all Fire Departments within California to inspect and report all multiple residential occupancies units. These fire and life safety inspections will lessen the threat of fires within our community.

### - How are inspection fees calculated?

The programs inspection fees will be charged in accordance with the Fire Districts adopted master fee schedule as allowed by the Health and Safety Code. The fee will be per parcel and per unit fee. The concept behind the fee schedule is to be fair and equal to all complexes big and small. There will be a base fee of \$100 plus an additional \$10 per unit.

### Why do you need to know how many units I have?

The information allows us to coordinate inspections and update our records.

### - What forms do we need to provide to the Fire Inspector?

The pre-inspection checklist and the Smoke Detector and Carbon Monoxide Certification form. The checklist helps you prepare for the inspection and will assist us to gather the primary safety issues about your property.

Provide the completed checklist to the Inspector at the time of the inspection.

### - The pre-inspection checklist indicates that if violations are not in compliance, we will need to correct it. Some items appear to indicate that we will have to make the expense to install new systems. Is this the case?

The pre-inspection checklist identifies the primary safety issues on your property. Not all of the questions apply to every property. At a minimum, every unit will have smoke detectors in all sleeping rooms and the hallway adjacent, a carbon monoxide device, and a fire extinguisher. Please answer the questions to the best of your ability. (If the question does not apply you will not be required to make additional expenses?)

### - How will the owner or agent ensure that all Smoke Detectors and Carbon Monoxide devices are operating properly?

Each owner or agent will need to coordinate an interior inspection in all units prior to the Fire Inspection. The attached Smoke Detector/Carbon Monoxide Detector Inspection Checklist will be completed by the owner/manager and given to the Fire Inspector at the time of the inspection.

### - What if I do not know if my Smoke Detectors or Carbon Monoxide are state approved or installed correctly?

Check the owner's manual, look for the independent testing laboratory's seal and the California State Fire Marshal mark on the device. Replace devices older than ten years.

- **Can we call to schedule the Fire and Life Safety inspection?**

The Barstow Fire Protection District will inspect your property throughout the year but a request for an inspection may be made at, [Jreed@barstowca.org](mailto:Jreed@barstowca.org), or call us at (760) 255-5161.

- **Can I replace my existing Smoke Detector with a Carbon Monoxide device?**

No, both Smoke Alarms/Detectors and Carbon Monoxide devices are required in all dwellings. However, a combination Smoke and Carbon Monoxide alarm/Detector will satisfy both requirements.

- **Fire extinguisher(s) are required, what do I need to do?**

Contact a licensed fire extinguisher company. You can find a contractor with a search online or in the phone book under "Fire Extinguishers." Before hiring a contractor, check the Contractors State License Board (CSLB) web site, [www.cslb.ca.gov](http://www.cslb.ca.gov), or call at (800) 321-CSLB, to ensure the contractor is licensed and in good standing. Fire extinguishers must be installed at least 3 feet off the ground and no higher than 5 feet high. The fire extinguisher must be a **minimum size of 2A10BC** and placed at no more than 75' apart. If you own a two-story complex a fire extinguisher is required at every landing.

- **What about vandalism? Can I keep the fire extinguisher(s) indoors?**

You may install an outdoor fire extinguisher cabinet or provide an extinguisher indoors. If you have an indoor extinguisher, you must provide proof of purchase and certification and every unit must be provided with an extinguisher.

- **I have a two-story building with one unit on each floor; do I need to provide a fire extinguisher on each floor?** Yes.

- **Do we need to provide a fire extinguisher in the laundry room?** Yes.

- **What is a rental unit?** /The (B.M.C.) Barstow Municipal Code, 5.90.020, it is defined as:

- o Existing rental housing unit means a rental housing unit constructed prior to the effective date of the ordinance codified in this chapter.
- o Newly constructed housing unit means a rental housing unit constructed after the effective date of the ordinance codified in this chapter.
- o Rental housing unit means any single-family dwelling, apartment, condominium or similar structure used or offered for rent or lease.
- o Residential rental unit means and includes any dwelling unit occupied by persons other than the legal owner.

- **Is the property owner or their designated representative required to be present during the inspection?** No, but failure to provide access to required areas AND TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION might result in a failed inspection.

- **How will an inspection be scheduled and how much time will be allowed to make corrections, if needed?** Contact Building & Safety, 760-255-5161, to schedule the next inspection. Generally the time frame is between 1 and 30 days.

- **What preparations should be made involving animals prior to inspections?** All pets will be confined or restrained in such a way as to eliminate any possibility of attack or escape during the inspection process.

- **What happens when a property passes an inspection and a complaint is made by a tenant at a later date?** The owner / manager has the opportunity to deal with any complaint first, if the complaint continues to exist with any correction then the appropriate department will deal with the complaint.

- **Do all units require hard wired smoke and carbon monoxide detectors?** Only if that is how they were originally installed, if not battery operated will be required.
- **Will an older building be forced to comply with the more current stringent building codes?** No, as long as the building has been maintained in good condition since the time of construction. Additional questions may be answered by Building and Safety, 760-255-5161.
- **Where are smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors to be installed in the residence?**
  - Smoke detectors are required to be placed:
    - In each sleeping room.
    - Each hallway adjacent to the sleeping rooms.
    - At every floor level.
  - Carbon monoxide detectors are required to be placed:
    - Outside each sleeping area
    - At every floor level including basements.
- **Are permits required for minor repairs?** Contact Building and Safety with any questions, 760-255-5161.
- **Does it matter if tenants, friends or unlicensed contractors complete the necessary repairs?** Contact Building and Safety for clarification, 760-255-5161.
- **What if the owner or responsible party ignores or refuses to participate in the program?** The responsible person will be held accountable criminally and/or civilly.

**Most areas of inspection, but may include additional areas:**

- Common areas
- Offices
- Laundry facilities
- Grounds
- Exiting
- Lighting
- If there are tenant complaints during the inspection an inspection of the tenant housing may take place with their consent.

**Below are a few common tenant complaints, but not all complaints are listed.**

**Each owner/responsible party for each rental unit are expected to correct all valid complaints:**

- Complaints of pests / vermin / rodents
- Unit is not properly identified
- Smoke detectors
- Carbon monoxide detector
- Broken windows / missing screens
- All mechanical devices provided will operate properly – for example but not limited to:
  - Air conditioners /evaporative coolers
  - Heater
  - Refrigerator, if provided by owner
  - Water heaters
  - Lights
  - Electrical outlets
  - Approved security bars with quick release in bedrooms
  - Doors will operate correctly
  - Weather protection/weather stripping/seals will work properly