

# FIRE SAFETY AND YOU



## Information about your responsibilities as a building owner under the Manitoba Fire Code



Winnipeg Fire Department

Fire Prevention Branch  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor - 185 King St.  
Winnipeg, MB, R3B 1J1  
Call 311  
[Email](#)

## KNOW YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

### **Keeping your buildings free of fire hazards is the law!**

Building owners are legally responsible to maintain buildings to the Manitoba Fire Code and could receive fines and/or jail time for non-compliance to the Codes. Ignorance of the law is not an excuse.

The Manitoba Fire Code states: 2.2.1.1.(1) “Unless otherwise specified, the owner or the owner's authorized agent shall be responsible for carrying out the provisions of this Code.”

The Winnipeg Fire Prevention Branch has developed basic fire safety guidelines for all building types and checklists for various building occupancies.

These include:

- [Checklist Multi-unit Residential Occupancies](#)
- [Checklist Assembly, churches, community clubs, nightclubs, pubs and restaurants](#)
- [Checklist Daycares & Preschools](#)
- [Checklist Hospitals and health Care Facilities](#)
- [Checklist Residential Care Facilities](#)
- [Checklist Manufacturing](#)
- [Checklist Retail & Service](#)
- [Checklist Office](#)
- [Checklist School & Educational Facilities](#)
- [Checklist Warehouses](#)
- [Checklist Fuel-dispensing Stations](#)

This guideline will provide common Fire Code requirements; additional requirements apply to all of the occupancies listed above. Common requirements can be found in the specific inspection checklists for those occupancies on our website. For more information please contact us via the email on this page.

[Information on fire inspections](#)

# FIRE SAFETY AND YOU

## MOST COMMON FIRE CODE VIOLATIONS

The following requirements are common to most buildings the Manitoba Fire Code, other than dwellings.

### PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS:

- Required in all buildings except dwellings.
- Must be located adjacent to corridors or aisles that provide access to exits. Must be mounted in a visible location, accessible, routinely serviced.
- Must be listed by a recognizing testing agency and must be in full working condition on with no damage, corrosion, leakage, malfunctioning parts or clogged nozzles.
- Are subject to maintenance at least once a year and must have a secure tag or label listing the month and year the maintenance was performed, by whom and if recharging was performed.
- Must have hydrostatic testing carried out at the following intervals:
  - Five years: water or antifreeze (cartridge operated or stored pressure), wetting agent or foam.
  - Twelve years: dry chemical (stored pressure, cartridge or cylinder operated) and dry powder (cartridge or cylinder operated).
- Must be serviced and tagged yearly by a certified technician.

### EMERGENCY LIGHTING:

- Emergency lighting may be provided by battery packs with remote and attached heads, or by emergency generators that will illuminate specified A/C fixtures or remote light heads. Battery packs must be regularly serviced and for generators, a fuel supply of at least eight hours must be on hand. The lighting must be operational and have no visible damage.

### FIRE SAFETY PLANS:

- The emergency procedures to be used in case of fire (including sounding the fire alarm, notifying the fire department and evacuation procedures).
- The appointment and training of designated supervisory staff to carry out fire safety duties.
- Documents, including diagrams, showing the type, location and operation of the building fire emergency systems.
- The holding of fire drills.
- The control of fire hazards in the building.
- The inspection and maintenance of building facilities provided for the safety of occupants.
- A record of inspections, maintenance procedures and tests to be kept for at least two years.

### EXIT SIGNS:

- Exit signs must be installed according the Manitoba Building Code requirements for your occupancy.
- Signs must be visible and remain illuminated at all times the building is occupied.
- Exit signs shall be maintained in operating condition at all times.

### FIRE SEPARATIONS:

- Buildings must have no holes or openings in drywall, ceilings or other fire separations.
- Where rooms or spaces within a building contain a high-hazard industrial occupancy, it shall be separated from the remainder of the building by fire separations in conformance to the Manitoba Building Code.
- Openings in fire separations (doors, vents) shall be protected with closures (fire damper, door).
- Closures (doors, dampers) in fire separations must be inspected annually and maintained to function as designed.

# FIRE SAFETY AND YOU

## General Checklist of Requirements for Building Owners

- Address:** Must be visible from road and lane, free from foliage, trees, etc.
- Evacuation plans:** Required for all buildings with a fire alarm system.
- Exit corridors:** Must lead to code compliant exits, such as an exterior door or exit stairwell. Means of egress must be free of obstructions. Fire escapes and stairs must be kept free of ice and snow.
- Exit doors:** Must not be locked or blocked from either the inside or outside. They must be easily opened from the inside without keys or special knowledge to open them. They must be equipped with latching hardware that will release when a force of 20 pounds or less is applied. Stairwell doors must be equipped with self-closing and latching devices that latch the door shut when released.
- Fire alarm systems:** Must have a working A/C power-on bulb, and be kept in good working condition with no audible or visual damage. They must have a current service label (dated within the last twelve months). A fire alarm system must be maintained fully functional at all times.
- Fire department access:** The owner or occupier must maintain fire lanes and fire department connections to provide access to the fire department at all times.
- Fire doors:** must not be blocked or wedged open, including stairwell doors.
- Fire hydrants:** Must be accessible, free of damage and serviced within the specified date. Private hydrants require annual service and servicing label, with records kept on site.
- Fire separations:** Must have no holes or openings that compromise their purpose.
- Outdoor storage areas:** Must be in good condition and arranged in a manner that minimizes fire risk.
- Garbage disposal:** Commercial containers must be located six metres from combustible buildings and away from building openings. If kept inside, commercial containers should have tight-fitting lids and be kept in fire-separated rooms.
- Storage areas:** Must be kept free of excessive clutter, with aisle widths of at least 1 metre in larger rooms.
- Mechanical rooms:** (such as boiler, furnace or electrical rooms) must provide clear access to equipment, and, in the case of boiler rooms, must contain no storage. Distribution panels should have a clearance of at least 18 to 24 inches. In the breaker box, all switches and/or fuses should be identified, including the fire alarm breaker. Doors must remain closed, with self-closing devices in boiler rooms.
- Laundry rooms:** Keep rear of machines free of dust and lint. Lint traps must be cleaned regularly, with lint waste disposed of safely. Ensure electrical connections are not a fire hazard. Doors are to be kept closed with a self-closing device. Dryer vents should be cleaned as necessary or annually.

