



# FIRE PREVENTION GUIDELINE

<b>Title: Multi-Family Residential (Apartment) Inspection Requirements</b>		
<b>Number:</b> FPG-18	<b>Effective Date:</b> 01/01/20203	<b>Revised Date:</b> 03/01/2023
<b>Code References:</b> California Fire Code (CFC), California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 19, Merced Municipal Code (MMC), California Health & Safety Code		
<b>Note:</b> <i>This guideline is a summary of Fire Department clarifications and interpretations of City and State Codes and nationally recognized standards in accordance with the currently adopted edition of the Fire Code. Information contained herein applies to typical circumstances and may not address all situations.</i>		

### Scope

This Guideline has been developed to assist business owners and managers with state and local requirements for apartment complexes.

### Codes and Guidelines

This guideline shall apply to multi-family apartment occupancies in accordance with the California Fire Code, California Code of Regulations, Title19 and the Merced Municipal Code.

### Definition

For the purposes of this guideline, Multi-family residential occupancies are defined as those occupancies containing sleeping units or more than two dwelling units where the occupants are permanent in nature.

### Specific Requirements

#### 1. Fire Extinguishers

- a. A minimum of one 2-A:10-B:C rated fire extinguisher is required on each floor level.
- b. Travel distance to the nearest fire extinguisher shall not exceed 75 feet.
- c. Buildings in excess of 3,000 square feet or with other protection requirements may require additional units.
- d. Additional fire extinguishers may be required for laundry rooms, maintenance buildings or similar uses.
- e. All extinguishers must have a current State Fire Marshal service tag attached and be serviced annually or after each use, whichever occurs first.
- f. Extinguishers must be properly mounted in visible and accessible locations.

#### 2. Smoke Detectors



## **FIRE PREVENTION GUIDELINE**

- a. Every dwelling unit and all common enclosed hallway areas are required to be provided with State Fire Marshal approved smoke detectors.
- b. Smoke detectors shall be installed in accordance with the California Building Code and with the manufacturers specifications and shall be maintained in an operational condition at all times.

### **3. Address**

- a. All buildings and individual apartment units shall have addresses posted to be plainly visible from the street fronting the apartment complex. The building addresses and range of unit numbers must be provided, for example: (400 West Main Units A – E must be indicated as 400 A – E or 400A – 400E.
- b. All numbers shall be a minimum of 6” to 8” high and be colored to contrast with their background.

### **4. Combustible Materials**

- a. All accumulations of waste materials, dry weeds, trash or other combustible debris must be cleared from premises.

### **5. Gas Meters**

- a. All aboveground gas meters or regulators must be protected from possible vehicular damage if located near roadway, parking lots or other areas subject to vehicular travel. Meters must also be labeled to indicate which unit or area they serve.

### **6. Heating Equipment**

- a. All water heater closets and laundry rooms must be maintained clear of all combustible waste, trash, lint or other debris. Water heater closet doors must be in place and in good repair.

### **7. Security Bars/Grates on Windows**

- a. Bars or grates are prohibited on all windows required for escape from sleeping areas, unless equipped with exit hardware approved by the Office of the State Fire Marshal, Merced City Fire Department and Merced City Inspection Services Department.

### **8. Electrical**

- a. All electrical cords in laundry rooms or other common areas must be in good repair without splices or cuts.
- b. Electrical outlets must have cover-plates in place.
- c. Electrical breaker panels should be properly labeled to identify circuits served by each breaker and be unobstructed.

### **9. Accessory Uses**



## FIRE PREVENTION GUIDELINE

- a. Assembly rooms, pool storage areas, maintenance shops and similar uses must comply with the specific requirements for that use.

### 10. Fire Sprinkler Systems

- a. An 18-inch clearance must be maintained below all sprinkler heads (except for storage area along the walls).
- b. Extra sprinkler heads and sprinkler wrench must be kept on the premises.
- c. Quarterly sprinkler system inspection to be performed by qualified persons. (Records to be maintained on site for review during inspection)
- d. Annual sprinkler system maintenance to be performed by a State Fire Marshal licensed company or person or a fire protection contractor (C-16). (Records to be maintained on site for review during inspection)
- e. Five-Year sprinkler system test to be performed by a State Fire Marshal licensed company or person or a fire protection contractor (C-16). (When required - Provide copy to City of Merced Fire Department once completed)
- f. Five-Year certification tag must be attached to the sprinkler riser or fire department connection.

### 11. Standpipe Systems

- a. Semi-Annual standpipe system inspection check to be performed by qualified persons. (Records to be maintained on site for review during inspection)
- b. Annual standpipe system maintenance to be performed by a State Fire Marshal licensed company or person or a fire protection contractor (C-16). (Records to be maintained on site for review during inspection)
- c. Five-Year standpipe system test to be performed by a State Fire Marshal licensed company or person or a fire protection contractor (C-16). (When required - Provide copy to City of Merced Fire Department once completed)
- d. Five-Year certification tag must be attached to the sprinkler riser or fire department connection.

### 12. Private Fire Hydrants

- a. All private fire hydrants must be tested annually, including an inspection and flow test every 5 years. Work shall be conducted by a C-16 license holder.
- b. Test results should be submitted to Compliance Engine (data base).



## **FIRE PREVENTION GUIDELINE**

- c. Copies of tests should also be maintained on site.