



Oberlin Fire Department

SELF-INSPECTION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Rev 06/12/2014

1. Why am I now receiving this Self-Inspection Form?

Section 106.2 (IFC) of the City's Fire Prevention Code authorizes the Fire Code Official to conduct inspections as are deemed necessary to determine the extent of compliance with the provisions of the code. This program was designed to be more convenient and cost effective than an annual, in-person inspection by the Fire Department.

2. Why has the fire inspection program changed?

The Oberlin fire prevention program has been enhanced to address new rating requirements enacted (effective July 1) by the Insurance Service Office (ISO). ISO collects information on municipal fire-protection efforts in communities throughout the United States. In each of those communities, ISO analyzes the relevant data using a Fire Suppression Rating Schedule (FSRS), and then assigns a Public Protection Classification from 1 to 10. Class 1 generally represents superior property fire protection; Class 10 indicates that the area's fire-suppression program does not meet minimum criteria. The FSRS considers: fire department (50 points), water supply (40 points), emergency communications (10 points) and community risk reduction (5.5 points). The City of Oberlin is currently a Class 5.

In the new FSRS schedule, ISO implemented a component entitled 'Community Risk Reduction' (CRC). The addition of CRC gives incentives to those communities who strive proactively to reduce fire severity through a structured program of fire prevention activities including:

- Adoption and enforcement of fire prevention codes
- Public fire safety education
- Fire investigation program

Beyond the mere adoption of a fire prevention code, the Fire Department is responsible to enforcement those provisions, including:

- Conduct inspections of all nonresidential properties at least once per year
- Perform code compliance follow-up inspections to verify correction of violations.
- Inspect private fire protection equipment
- Perform inspections for Certificates of Occupancy

3. **How does the ISO classification affect me?**

ISO's Public Protection Classification information plays an important part in the decisions insurers make affecting the underwriting and pricing of property insurance. Insurance companies — not ISO — establish the premiums they charge to policyholders. The methodology a company uses to calculate premiums for property insurance may depend on the company's fire loss experience, underwriting guidelines, and marketing strategy.

4. **I was never charged a fee before. Why now?**

This increased inspection activity requires additional staff time beyond the few full-time personnel positions. The fee structure was established to offset additional staff cost to conduct these inspections and the administrative record processing.

5. **What is the building owner's responsibility?**

- \$ Common areas (un-leasable space) in multi-tenant properties
- \$ Exterior of the building including address, dumpsters, Knox Boxes, etc.
- \$ Fire protection systems (If the same system serves the entire building)
- \$ Emergency lighting (If it serves the entire building)
- \$ Fire Extinguishers
- \$ Electrical panels in the common areas

6. **What is the business tenant's responsibility?**

- \$ The inspection items that are located in your tenant space only.
- \$ Fire Protection Systems that you have a separate contract for such as special alarms, cooking hood suppression systems, etc.
- \$ If items are not located in your tenant space, mark N/A
- \$ Dumpster, if you are responsible for your own trash removal

7. **Some of the items to be inspected do not apply to our office space, how do we answer these questions?**

The Self inspection form was designed for a variety of occupants. You are only responsible for what is in your tenant space not the common area. If a question does not apply to your tenant space, mark the answer 'N/A'.

8. **Is there a different form for tenants?**

No, the self-inspection form is designed for both tenants and owners of occupancies identified as low hazard by the Fire Department.

9. **Who is responsible for the Self-Inspection fee of \$25?**

Each business/tenant receiving a Self-Inspection form is responsible for payment of their fee.

10. **If a tenant occupies more than one floor, but only has one suite number, will they be charged by the floor?**

No, the tenant will only be charged for the total square footage of the leased space.

11. **We do not own the building and the landlord has full access to our tenant space. Do we still have to complete the Self-Inspection form?**

Yes. If you are leasing the tenant space, you are required to have an annual inspection. You can choose not to participate in the Self-Inspection Program. However, your tenant space will be inspected by the Fire Department and your fee will be based on the square footage fees.

12. **If I choose not to complete the Self-Inspection form and select to have a fire inspector conduct the inspection, will I be charged for just my office space or the entire building?**

If you choose not to participate in the Self-Inspection program, a fire inspector will conduct the inspection and base the fee on the square footage of the business/tenant space only.

13. **Why are we being asked to do self-inspections?**

You are being asked to do self-inspections for the following reasons: In the interest of public safety, business owner awareness, and to provide a safe business and work environment.

14. **What if I discarded my letter or did not receive one?**

Visit, <http://www.oberlin-fire.com/safety/selfinspect.html> or contact our office at (440) 774-3211 to obtain a form.