



DENVER
THE MILE HIGH CITY

CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER
Department of Safety
Fire Department
Fire Prevention and Investigation Division

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Denver Fire Department
Fire Prevention and Investigation Division

FAQs

Fire Safety Inspection Program

If your question isn't answered below or if you require further explanation, please call us at 720-913-3473 or email us at denverfpb@denvergov.org.

What is my annual Fire Safety Inspection?

The Denver Fire Department conducts inspections of the City's 23,000+ commercial occupancies (businesses, schools, institutions, apartment buildings, etc.) to ensure that conditions at those properties are in compliance with the Denver Fire Code.

Your annual Fire Safety Inspection, which is required by law, is also one of the lowest-cost resources available to protect your property and the health and lives of your employees and those who visit your business or occupy your premises. In part thanks to this inspection program, the City of Denver enjoys an extremely low fire loss rating for a city of its size, with the additional benefit of lower overall property insurance rates compared to other cities.

Why is there a fee?

Beginning in January 2002, the City and County of Denver implemented a fee-based Fire Safety Inspection Program to recoup the administrative costs of these inspections. Until that time, inspections had been conducted at no charge, but the costs of doing this were becoming prohibitive, so Denver joined a growing number of municipalities to charge fees for the service.

Who conducts the inspection?

- **Smaller properties:** If your business property is relatively small, such as a small retail store or low-rise apartment building, it will be inspected by crews from your local fire station. If you don't already know your local fire station, you can find out and get their contact info at our [website](#). As of 2008, most fire crew inspections are being conducted with hand-held tablet computers that enable inspectors to transmit information in a highly efficient way that saves paper and eliminates the need for cumbersome re-keying of data.
- **Larger properties:** If your business property is a high-rise building, an institutional campus with highly technical life-safety systems, or a hazardous material or flammable material

occupancy, it will be inspected by personnel from the Fire Prevention and Investigation Division.

When will my inspection be scheduled?

Based on last year's records for your business, our staff will schedule your 2009 inspection to take place approximately 12 months from your 2008 inspection, or as close to that date as possible given our crews' workloads.

- Do you prefer to have your inspection at a different time of year? Just call our office at 720-913-3473 and we'll do our best to accommodate your request.
- Has there been a change in your business ownership, size of property, etc.? Please call 720-913-3570 and let us know.

In most cases, the personnel who will be doing the inspection will contact you a day or two beforehand to let you know when they will be coming. If you have any questions about the scheduling of your inspection, call us at 720-913-3473.

What can I expect during the inspection?

Once on site, Fire Department inspectors will check your building's exits, emergency lighting, exit signs, components of fire-resistive separation, access roadways and fire lanes, and testing and maintenance records of fire-safety systems. They will also make sure there is an emergency evacuation plan in place.

If the inspectors find any conditions that violate city ordinance, they will notify you and, if the conditions cannot be corrected on the spot, will issue an order notice requesting that the condition be corrected as soon as possible. If you are unsure how to correct the problem, you are always welcome to call and we will help you determine what action steps to take. A later inspection will be scheduled to confirm that the violation has been corrected. An additional fee is charged for each re-inspection.

When do I pay?

After any inspection, you will be invoiced within a week of the inspector finishing the inspection report. Fees are due and payable within 30 days.

How much will it cost?

Your fee is based on your property's square footage, number of floors and type of occupancy (i.e., school, factory, shopping mall, arena, etc.). The new schedule of fees will soon be available online at www.denvergov.org/fire_prevention, or you may call our office at 720-913-3473 and ask.

Where do I send my money?

Use the self-addressed envelope included with your invoice and mail your payment, or bring it in person, to Denver Fire Department Headquarters, 745 West Colfax Avenue, Denver, Colorado 80204.

What if there's a mistake on my invoice?

Just call our helpful clerical staff at 720-913-3473 or email us at denverfpb@denvergov.org and we'll do our best to solve the problem and issue a corrected invoice.

Who determines the fees, and how?

The original 2002 fee schedule was established by a committee comprised of officials from City Finance Office, Risk Management Office, City Attorney's Office, the Manager of Safety's Office, and the Fire Department's Fire Prevention and Investigation Division.

The fees were set to reflect the City's actual cost to conduct Fire Safety Inspections. Representatives of the Apartment and Condominium Association, Building Owners and Managers Association, and Denver Public Schools supported the fee-based Fire Safety Inspection Program and helped us design it. In 2001, the fee schedule was brought before the Public Safety Committee of City Council. Although City ordinance does not strictly require City Council approval such fees, the Fire Department felt it was very important to have Council approval, and City Council did approve the program and the fee schedule.

In 2008, as the program faced rising costs, the Fire Department came back to City Council with a proposal to increase Fire Safety Inspection fees to bring them into line with the 2008 administrative costs of the program. Effective January 1, 2009, Fire Safety Inspection Program fees will increase by 30%. To better understand this increase, a small business that has paid \$10 annually since 2002 will pay \$13 in 2009. A larger business that has paid \$40 since 2002 will pay \$52 beginning in 2009. After 2009, a cost-of-living increase will be built into the fees.

Have business owners accepted the fees willingly?

Yes, for the most part the business community has accepted the fee-based program willingly, thanks largely to our having secured the agreement of the various professional associations prior to implementing the program. During the first year or two we had some queries from individual business owners who questioned the program, but most business owners accepted the fact that Fire Safety Inspections are a vital service and the modest charge is well worth it.

What is my "Emergency Pre-Plan Inspection"?

In addition to receiving an annual Fire Safety Inspection, most businesses and commercial occupancies in Denver receive an annual Emergency Pre-Plan Inspection, where crews from the local fire station visit the facility to conduct pre-emergency planning to ensure that their response is as efficient and effective as possible in the event of an emergency. This inspection is handled at a different time than your Fire Safety Inspection and this service is provided at no charge. (Although, if violations are noted during this inspection, your property may be referred for a Fire Safety Inspection, for which there is a fee.)

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