DALLAS FIRE-RESCUE DEPARTMENT
Inspection & Life Safety Education
Fire Code Requirements for Apartment Complex Occupancies

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This checklist provides some of the basic regulations governing the operation of **Apartment Complex Occupancies**. It is not possible to cover all regulations. If you have a particular question of concern, please telephone or FAX the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department. The initial inspection is conducted at no charge. There is no charge for the first reinspection. The second reinspection is subject to a $100.00 fee, with all reinspections after the second, subject to a $105.00 fee.

1. Permits

A. A valid certificate of occupancy from Building Inspection is required.

B. Permit required for welding and cutting operations and limited access gates. Other permits may be required. Contact Dallas Fire-Rescue for more information.

2. Exit Ways

A. Maintained unobstructed. No combustible storage allowed in exit ways and exit enclosures.

B. Barriers in pathway must be openable from the exit side without the use of a key or special knowledge.

C. Sleeping rooms must have an openable door or window that serves as a second exit. Burglar bars or other security devices must be openable from the inside without the use of a key, separate tool, or special knowledge.

3. Fire Lanes and Access

A. Properly marked and clear of obstructions.

B. Limited access gates installed across fire lanes must be automatic and equipped with approved Dallas Fire-Rescue Department radio receivers, as well as a manual backup. Limited access control gates must be installed and maintained in accordance with the requirements of the Dallas Fire Code Section I104.

4. Fire Extinguishers

A. Typically, one 2A-10BC extinguisher is required for each laundry room, boiler room, office maintenance area, pool chemical storage room, and clubhouse.

B. Mounted in conspicuous accessible locations.

C. Inspected for proper maintenance annually by licensed individuals.

D. Must be recharged following use.

5. Fire Alarm Systems

A. Installed in accordance with Chapter 9 of the Dallas Fire Code.

B. Fire alarm systems installed, maintained, and approved prior to June 16, 2007 are considered to be in compliance with the Dallas Fire Code.

C. Maintained in an operative condition at all times, and replaced or repaired when defective. Immediately notify Dallas Fire-Rescue at 214-670-4319 if fire alarm system becomes non-operational.

D. Written operating instructions provided and maintained at an approved location.

E. Manual alarms and smoke alarms should be tested at least annually, and/or after modification.

6. Single-Station Smoke Alarms

A. Single-station smoke alarms shall be located outside of each sleeping area within each dwelling unit and in each room used for sleeping purposes. Single-station smoke alarms shall not be required in each room used for sleeping purposes if the single-station smoke alarms were installed and approved prior to November 15, 1999 and are maintained.

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B. Single-station smoke alarms shall be mounted on the ceiling at least 4 inches from the wall, or mounted on the wall, at least 4, but not more than 12 inches from the ceiling.

C. Maintained in an operative condition at all times, and replaced or repaired when defective.

7. Sprinkler Systems

A. Maintained in approved working condition. Immediately notify Dallas Fire-Rescue at 214-670-4319 if sprinkler system becomes non-operational.

B. Identify controls, drains, and test control valves with approved signage.

C. Access to valves and/or fire department connections cannot be obstructed.

D. A sprinkler wrench must be provided for each type of sprinkler head installed in the building. Spare sprinkler heads of the same types and ratings installed in the building must be provided for a system as follows:

(1) Less than 300 system heads, a minimum of 6 spare heads.

(2) 300 to 1,000 system heads, a minimum of 12 spare heads.

(3) Over 1,000 system heads, a minimum of 24 spare heads.

E. Maintain an 18-inch clearance between sprinkler heads and storage.

F. Test at least annually.

8. Flammable Liquids

A. Stored in approved containers.

B. Quantity stored must be no more than quantity necessary for maintenance, not to exceed 30 gallons.

9. Miscellaneous

A. Post a correct address visible from the street. Numbers shall be a minimum of 4 inches high and contrast with background. In complexes with multiple buildings, each building must be designated as well as each unit within that building. (Example: Building 12, Units 1206-1230)

B. Provide cover plates for all electrical panels, outlets, boxes, and junctions.

C. Gasoline fueled vehicles, portable unvented fuel fired heating equipment, and portable LP gas containers are prohibited inside dwelling units.

D. Extension cords shall not be utilized in place of permanent wiring. Extension cords allowed to be used only with portable appliances.

E. Secure compressed gas cylinders in an upright position.

F. Gas-fired appliances must be properly vented to the outside, have approved flex-type connections, and have cut-off valves.

G. Vent clothes dryers to the outside, and clean lint from dryers and dryer vent ducts as often as necessary to prevent the accumulation of lint and dust.

H. Flameproof drapes and decorative materials located in common areas.

I. Secure vacant buildings to prevent entry of unauthorized persons.

J. Store swimming pool chemicals in a cool, dry location.

K. Open-flame cooking devices and heating devices including outdoor fireplaces shall not be operated on combustible balconies or within 10 feet of combustible construction. Open-flame cooking devices and heating devices are allowed to be stored on balconies.

L. Portable, electric space heaters are not allowed to be plugged into extension cords and must not be operated within 3 feet of any combustible material.