



Code Outreach Program –Fire Safety Inspections of Assembly Occupancies Part 1 of 3 – Pre-Inspection

Section 1203.3 (h) of the Minimum Standards for Administration and Enforcement ([19 NYCRR Part 1203](#)) requires buildings that contain an area of public assembly to undergo fire safety and property maintenance inspections at intervals not to exceed one year. This and upcoming editions of the Code Outreach Program will outline some common pre- and post- inspection procedures as well as violations and situations commonly encountered by code enforcement officials and building safety inspectors during these inspections.

Please note: The information provided as part of this Code Outreach Program series is for informational purposes only and is not intended to be representative of every inspection or scenario. Inspectors will need to consult with their municipal attorney and review their local laws outlining their local enforcement program and review each occupancy individually to determine how to perform each inspection, how to issue violation notices, the required frequency of inspections, etc.

An important step that is frequently overlooked during fire safety and property maintenance inspections is the pre-inspection stage. Prior to arriving on-site, it can be helpful to perform the following:

1. Inspections must be performed under the current Fire and Property Maintenance Codes (currently the [2015 International Fire Code](#) (2015 IFC) and the [2015 International Property Maintenance Code](#) (2015 IPMC), both of which are modified by the [2017 Uniform Code Supplement](#)). It may also be necessary to review 19 NYCRR Parts 1225, 1226, 1228, and any other applicable Part, including any emergency rules. Reviewing these documents for the retroactive provisions prior to arriving on site is always beneficial.
2. Review the most recent inspection reports to become familiar with the building and past violations, if any.
3. Obtain copies of any third-party inspection reports from the building owner/manager and review them for any noted violations, issues, or corrective actions taken. These reports typically address the inspection of the sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems, elevators, generators, fire pumps, commercial kitchen suppression systems, emergency evacuation drill records, annual building staff training, etc.
4. If available, review the building plans, certificate of occupancy, and current or past building permits to better understand the building layout and determine the location of any higher hazard areas, elevator rooms, mechanical spaces, assembly spaces, etc.
5. Where necessary, coordinate with the building owner/manager for a schedule of when the building is occupied. While it can be helpful to inspect a building while it is occupied and under normal use, this may be a challenge for some buildings such as a courthouse, correctional facility, etc.

The next edition of the Code Outreach Program will focus on the actual inspection as well as common issues and violations encountered during the inspection. The DBSC and OFPC would like code enforcement officials and building safety inspectors to respond to this email and provide examples of the most commonly cited code section violations encountered during inspections of Assembly Occupancies. This information will be used to prepare Parts 2 and 3 of this inspection series. Please submit examples to: COP.codes@dos.ny.gov. Thank you for your contribution; we look forward to hearing from you!

Please look for Part 2 of this Code Outreach Program at the beginning of next month.

DBSC - A Division of Department of State
OFPC – An Office of the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Services

If you have questions pertaining to the Code Outreach Program, email us at COP.codes@dos.ny.gov

If you have questions pertaining to the Uniform Code or Energy Code, email our technical support group at: codes@dos.ny.gov

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