



Commonly Found Safety Violations in Existing Tenant Spaces and Buildings

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Thank you for choosing to bring your business to Prince William County. As a new tenant moving into an existing space, you may want to have your space inspected by a qualified individual, landlord, or the Property Manager. The purpose of the inspection is to determine if any fire, safety, or building maintenance violations exist in the space that you are going to occupy. Below is a list of the most common items found during the safety inspections conducted by County staff and **IS** not inclusive of every condition.

- Post the address of the space/building on the building and/or the exterior of each emergency exit door so it is visible.
- Maintain the minimum exit aisle and corridor widths of 36" to 44".
- Remove all storage from inside any utility closets to assure minimum working clearances for any electrical panels, heating and cooling equipment, and water heater.
- Any space or room with mechanical or electrical equipment should be labeled "Electrical Room", "Mechanical Room", etc.
- Replace bulbs and batteries in all non-working exit signs and emergency exit lights. Check for proper illumination and operation of the system and that there are no obstructions at the ceiling lines that prevent visibility.
- Verify that exit door(s) hardware is operational. Dead bolts or padlocks are not allowed to be used on these doors. Doors with approved locks and latches should have a sign that reads "This Door To Remain Unlocked When This Space Is Occupied". Normal operation for an exit door should not require more than one single motion to engage the latching device.
- Replace damaged and/or missing ceiling tiles in all areas of the space.
- For assembly uses, an occupancy load card is required to be displayed in each assembly space or building area with an occupancy load over 50.
- Verify that unusual ceiling/wall finishes meet the intent of the code: carpet on walls, decorations on the ceiling of combustible products, foam products exposed, etc.
- Repair all holes, damaged or worn components, elements, and equipment in the space.
- Verify that all plumbing fixtures remain in service and that any abandoned lines or pipes have been capped with proper materials. Water heater overflow pipe to discharge not more than 6" above floor level.
- Verify that the electrical panel board has a tight fitting cover, and install approved blanks for missing breakers. A panel schedule must be provided, and all breakers should be labeled.
- Electrical extension cords are not allowed to be used in permanent applications.
- Check to verify there is a 2A:10B:C fire extinguisher with proper inspection or annual maintenance tag mounted and located at or near each emergency exit door.
- Verify the fire suppression sprinkler heads are free from dust, grease, dirt, or paint that prevents their operation, that heads are secure at the underside of the ceiling finish, and that the escutcheon plate around the sprinkler head is in place.
- Verify that each emergency exit door(s) other than the main entrance has the wording "Emergency Exit Do Not Block" on the exterior side of the door. Lettering needs to be a contrasting color, the minimum letter width is 1", and the height is 6" minimum for each letter.
- Verify that the automatic fire suppression systems are maintained and inspected and keep this documentation on site.
- Verify that the fire alarm systems are maintained and inspected and keep this documentation on site.
- Verify that there is a permanent sign identifying the fire department connection (FDC) location on the building and rooms that are equipped with a fire suppression system equipment are labeled "Sprinkler Room".
- Verify that shelving in storage rooms does not interfere with the fire suppression system.
- For commercial occupancies with fire sprinkler systems, all areas need to be protected by a sprinkler head(s). Tenants sometimes build/remove walls and leave entire rooms or areas unprotected.
- Fire protection systems used to protect commercial cooking equipment need to be cleaned and inspected periodically and a tag affixed to the hood. These systems should also have a current maintenance inspection tag affixed to the system. Normally this is found attached to the manual activation handle for the fire suppression system and/or the container storing the fire suppression agent.

For questions or concerns, please contact the Department of Development Services at 703-792-6931 or the Fire Marshal Office at 703-792-6360. Please check the website at <https://www.pwcva.gov/> for additional information. Refer to the [website](#) to examine the overview of ordinary repairs that do not require permits and inspections.