

Multi-Family Residential Occupancy Fire Inspection Guidelines

Important 2023 updates

The BCBC considers a storage garage to be a different occupancy than a storage room, as such a fire separation with a minimum fire resistance rating of 1.5 hours is required between the storage garage and storage rooms. All storage rooms that are not separated by a fire separation with a fire-resistance rating of 1.5 must be removed from the storage garage by January 1st, 2024. Examples of non-compliant storage rooms in a storage garage include, but are not limited to, enclosed parking stalls with roll-down doors that are being used as a storage room, parking stalls that have been enclosed with drywall, plywood and a door, large and small custom-built cabinets within a parking stall, garden shed-type cabinets in parking stalls, equipment lockers and shipping containers.

Common Fire Service Requirements

- Access is required to all areas of the building excluding private residential suites. Keys/fobs shall be provided for all areas requiring access. If you have changed locksets, you must provide the updated keys to the FD.
- Address must be clearly visible from the road and free from foliage and in a contrasting colour.
- Egress and hallways must be kept clear and free from obstruction for a clear unobstructed path to the exit.
- Storage garages must be kept free of all storage excluding vehicles, bicycles, scooters, and motorcycles.
- Bicycles are stored in a fire-rated storage room **or** within a chain-link enclosure and fixed in place **or** within an enclosed parking stall fixed in place.
- Fire doors must not be wedged open, blocked, or altered. They must self-close and latch properly to maintain the fire separation. Stairwell doors are to be labelled alphabetically on both sides.
- Fire department connections must be clearly visible with appropriate signage, functional protective caps in place, and free from obstruction.
- Enclosed parking stalls must be free of **all** storage.
- Monthly fire alarm and generator testing: Monthly testing required for both the fire alarm system and generator (if applicable). A copy of the records is to be kept on site and readily accessible to the FD.
- Fire Hydrants must be clearly visible, unobstructed, and in operable condition. Private hydrants must be serviced annually and records kept on site.
- Fire and life safety systems: Includes fire alarm system, sprinkler system, fire extinguishers, and emergency lights and/or generator. Must be in operational as-built condition with up-to-date servicing performed by a qualified professional.
- Fire lane access must always be kept clear and accessible for fire department apparatuses.
- Personal locker in approved storage rooms must be maintained to not compromise sprinkler coverage, nor contain dangerous goods such as flammable liquids or propane cylinders.
- Service rooms must be kept clear of obstructions and tripping hazards. All control valves and shut-offs must be clearly labelled, easily accessible and clear of storage.
- Fire alarm bells must not be painted or altered in any way that may affect their performance.
- No storage permitted in electrical or elevator machine room.



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