

## ***Chapter 15.29 FIRE INSPECTIONS***

### **15.29.010 Purpose.**

Fire inspections are used to assess a building's fire safety measures by identifying potential life, property, and environmental hazards, and ensuring that all necessary fire safety codes and standards are being followed. Fire inspections often uncover dangerous conditions that could lead to life threatening emergencies. These inspections are essential for identifying and mitigating fire hazards within the City of National City. In order to ensure the protection of health, life and safety of National City citizens and patrons, the purpose of this chapter is to establish annual fire inspections of businesses with certain types of occupancy classifications and establish a self-inspection program for low-risk commercial businesses that do not require annual inspection. This chapter shall be interpreted in a manner that is consistent with applicable state and federal law.

### **15.29.020 Definitions.**

Whenever in this chapter the following terms are used, they shall be deemed and construed to have the meaning ascribed to such respective terms in this section.

- A. "Building Occupancies" pursuant to the 2022 California Code of Regulations, as amended from time to time:
1. Group A – includes among others, the use of a building or structure or portion thereof, for the gathering of persons for purposes such as civic, social or religious functions; recreation, food or drink consumption; or awaiting transportation or motion picture and television studio sound stages, approved production facilities and production locations.
  2. Group B – includes among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, for office, professional or service-type transactions, including storage of records and accounts.
  3. Group C – includes a site with programs and facilities established for the purpose of providing an outdoor group living experience with social, spiritual, educational, or recreational objectives, for five days or more during one or more seasons of the year.
  4. Group F – includes among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, for assembling, disassembling, fabricating, finishing, manufacturing, packaging, repair or processing operations.
  5. Group H – includes among others, the use of a building or structure, or portion thereof, which involves the manufacturing, processing, generation, or storage of materials that constitute a physical or health hazard in quantities in excess of those allowed in control areas.
  6. Group I – includes among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, in which people, cared for or living in supervised environment and having physical limitations because of health or age are harbored for medical treatment or other care or treatment, or in which people are detained for penal or correctional purposes or in which the liberty of the occupants is restricted.
  7. Group L – includes the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, containing one or more laboratory suites for the use and storage of hazardous materials are utilized for testing, analysis, instruction, research or development activities.

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8. Group M – includes among others, the use of a building or structure, or portion thereof, for the display and sale of merchandise, and involving stocks of goods, wares or merchandise incidental to such purposes and accessible to the public.
  9. Group S – includes among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, for storage that is not classified as a hazardous occupancy.

“Community Risk Reduction Division” consists of one Division Chief/Fire Marshal, one Deputy Fire Marshal, three Fire Inspectors, and one Administrative Secretary. The Community Risk Reduction Division’s primary goal is to prevent fires before they occur. This goal is achieved by ensuring existing and newly constructed properties, implement minimum requirements consistent with national recognized standards in order to safeguard the health and safety of the general public.

### **15.29.030 Annual Fire Inspections.**

- A. Pursuant to state law, all hotels, motels, lodging houses, apartment houses (multi-family), schools (public and private), hospitals, jails, and high-rises, shall be inspected annually by the Community Risk Reduction Division (California Health & Safety Code Sections 17621 (b), 13146.3, 13146.1, and 13217 as amended).
- B. Additional properties in National City including, but not limited to high-risk facilities, mixed-use commercial and public buildings are required to submit to a formal fire inspection annually by the Community Risk Reduction Division. Annual fire inspections are required for the following building occupancies:
  1. Group A
  2. Group B
    - i. Restaurants that utilize an open flame only. Other Group B occupancies do not require annual fire inspections.
  3. Group C
  4. Group F
  5. Group H
  6. Group I
  7. Group L
  8. Group M
  9. Group S
- C. Annual fire inspections will be subject to a fire inspection fee. See City’s Fee Schedule for annual fire inspection fee.
- D. Failure to submit to an annual fire inspection as required by this section, may result in administrative citations pursuant to Chapter 1.44 of the National City Municipal Code.

### **15.29.040 Biennial Fire Inspections.**

The Community Risk Reduction Division will conduct in-person fire inspections every two years for all other businesses not subject to Section 15.29.030. This biennial fire inspection ensures that fire safety standards are consistently upheld and allows the department to identify and address any issues that may not be visible through self-assessment alone. Businesses will be subject to a biennial fire inspection fee.

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### **15.29.050 Business Self-Inspection Program.**

To enhance fire safety compliance, building occupancies that do not require an annual fire inspection but are subject to biennial fire inspections, are encouraged to conduct a yearly self-inspection. This program encourages low-risk commercial business to conduct self-inspections, focusing on easily manageable fire safety measures such as, but not limited to, ensuring fire extinguishers are serviced, exits are clear, and storage is properly maintained around fire protection equipment. Self-inspection forms will be mailed to the business annually. Self-inspections are self-certifying and are not required to be submitted to the City. Business and property owners may request a fire inspection from the Community Risk Reduction Division at any time and will be subject to an inspection fee.