

FIRE MARSHAL TOWN OF NEW CANAAN

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I am often asked what are the most common violations we find when we conduct our annual Fire inspections of business and multi-family occupancies. In the interest of educating *all* residents and business owners/managers following is a list of the ten most common violations we find:

1. Use of extension cords in place of permanent wiring. Extension cords are only intended for temporary use such as holiday lights, temporary displays, projector hook-up for power point presentation, etc. Either additional outlets must be installed or, the item being plugged in must be moved to be closer to an existing outlet.
2. Access to exit doors blocked or restricted. If a door has an exit sign or, it is the only way in or out than it must be kept free and unencumbered in case of an emergency.
3. Exit signs not illuminated properly. Bulbs must be replaced as they go bad to keep exits and travel to them obvious at all times.
4. Batteries missing/dead in smoke detectors (multifamily). It is imperative that batteries be changed at least annually to avoid that annoying “chirp” and to insure early warning in the event of a fire.
5. Missing/outdated servicing/testing data for fire alarm and fire sprinkler systems. These systems must be serviced annually, by certified technicians, to insure reliable operation when needed.
6. Fire extinguishers not serviced. Fire extinguishers in commercial applications must be serviced at least annually.
7. Fire doors propped/wedged open. Fire doors are intended to stop the spread of heat, fire and, most important, smoke in the event of a fire. They are rendered useless when they are wedges/held open.
8. Dead bolt locks added to exit doors. Required exit doors must be capable of opening with a “single motion”. Turning a lock and then a knob/lever does not comply.
9. Storage in boiler rooms, electrical rooms that does not belong. No storage is appropriate but especially combustible storage. Most accumulations can just be discarded.
10. Egress windows (residential/multi-family) painted/stuck closed. All sleeping rooms I residential occupancies are required to have a window for emergency escape. Make sure windows work!

For assistance or guidance with any of the above issues please contact the New Canaan Fire Marshal’s office at 203-594-3030.