



CITY OF ST. PAUL
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**CERTIFICATE OF
OCCUPANCY GRADING
SHEET**

Revised 4/2020

Owners Guide for Improving Residential Fire Inspection Grades

There are many incentives for maintaining your property, including; safe and habitable housing, better tenants, increased property values, fewer inspections, and reduced inspections fees.

Once you have completed your Fire Safety Inspection, the Inspector will write a report based upon any violations found. The individual violations are assigned a score based on the severity. The score determines what grade the property receives.

Residential properties are graded into four (4) categories;

- Class A: Inspected and fees due every six (6) years.
- Class B: Inspected and fees due every four (4) years.
- Class C: Inspected and fees due every two (2) years.
- Class D: Inspected and fees due every one (1) year.

It is important to know that you can improve your grade on your next scheduled inspection cycle, if there are fewer or no violations found in that inspection. A better score means fewer inspections and fewer fees you pay!

Here are a few easy tips on how you can improve your grade;

1. **Be proactive about maintenance related items.** Simple, and easily repaired items may become more serious and cost much more to repair if general maintenance is deferred.
2. **Conduct a pre-inspection of your property before the inspector arrives.** Ensure the home is safe and habitable. For example, check Smoke and Carbon Monoxide alarms to ensure they are working, make sure escape routes and windows are unobstructed, remove combustibles away from heating appliances, ensure fire protections systems are maintained, and extension cords are not being used for permanent wiring.
3. **Educate your tenants about their responsibilities.** Tenants also have a responsibility to ensure your building is safe and habitable. They are responsible for keeping the home clean and sanitary and must not disable smoke alarms. The tenant must also allow access to make repairs upon receiving reasonable notice, usually 24 hours.

(see reverse)

Here are some of the most common code violations Fire Safety Inspectors observe, and an example of how the Fire Certificate of Occupancy grading system works. This list covers the most common code violations found by Fire Safety Inspectors but does not include a comprehensive list of all the codes we enforce. For more information, please visit our website at www.stpaul.gov/cofo.

TOP 10 RESIDENTIAL CODE VIOLATIONS

Number	Violation	Point Value
1	Carbon Monoxide (CO) alarm or smoke alarm missing or in an incorrect location.	10
2	Egress windows blocked by furniture.	10
3	Sleeping in the basement without an egress window.	10
4	Storage too close to water heater or furnace.	6
5	Improperly vented dryer.	6
6	Address missing on garage.	6
7	Peeling paint in the bathroom.	4
8	Improper handrail.	4
9	Use of multi-plug adapters.	2
10	Improper use of extension cords.	2

Grading Examples:

Single family dwelling with violations 2 and 7 will receive an A grade.

Single family dwelling with violations 1, 5, and 6 will receive a B grade.

Single family dwelling with **all** of the above violations will receive a C grade.

A single-family dwelling would need over 120 points to receive a D grade.

DSI's MISSION

To preserve and improve the quality of life in Saint Paul by protecting and promoting public health and safety for all.