



COUNTY OF PRINCE WILLIAM

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DEPARTMENT OF
FIRE & RESCUE

Kevin J McGee
Chief

MERCANTILE HANDOUT

The following fire prevention code requirements and safety information apply to businesses and buildings determined to be of Mercantile use.

Miscellaneous

1. Address properly posted in 4 inch letters of contrasting color.
2. Dumpster shall be a minimum of 15 feet from building.

Material Storage:

Inside Storage:

1. Storage in buildings and structures shall be orderly and shall not be within 2 feet of the ceiling.
2. An 18 inch clearance shall be maintained between storage and sprinkler heads. There may be requirements for the 18- inch clearance to be increased to 36 inch depending upon the design of the sprinkler and its associated listing.

Outside Storage:

1. Outside storage of combustibles or flammable material shall not be more than 20 feet in height, stored in an orderly manner and with consideration for fire department access.

Fire Protection Equipment:

1. Fire sprinkler systems shall be tested at 12 month intervals.
2. Portable fire extinguishers shall be of approved type and size and inspected at 12 month intervals.
3. Access to extinguishers shall be maintained at all times.
4. All fire department sprinkler/standpipe connections shall be free of all obstructions and be immediately accessible.
5. All fire protective signaling systems shall be tested at 12month intervals or as code requires.

6. A complete written record of all system tests, number of devices, and any maintenance performed on said system shall be kept by the owner or occupant of the premises.

Electrical:

1. An access of not less than 30 inches in width shall be maintained in front of all electrical service equipment and storage.
2. Extension cords shall not be used as a substitute for permanent wiring.

Decorative Material:

1. Flammable materials such as cotton batting, straw, dry vines, leaves, trees, artificial flowers or shrubbery, and foam plastic material shall not be used for decorative purposes in such a quantity as to constitute a fire hazard, unless such material is flame-proofed in an approved manner. Electric light bulbs shall not be decorated with paper or other combustible materials unless such materials have been flame-proofed.

Exit Signs and Emergency Lighting:

1. All exit signs shall be maintained and clearly illuminated at all times while the building is occupied.
2. Decorative materials, furnishings, or storage shall not be permitted to block the visibility of exit signs.
3. Emergency lighting shall be operable at all times while the building is occupied.

Egress:

1. Stairways, exit corridors, and similar elements of the means of egress shall be maintained in a safe condition and be available for immediate use.
2. Storage of combustible or flammable material shall not be placed, stored, or kept in any portion of an exit.
3. Aisleways shall have a minimum unobstructed clearance of 44 inches where serving an occupant load of greater than 50 and 36 inches where serving an occupant load of 50 or less.

Egress Doors:

1. All designated exit doors shall be openable from the side from which egress is to be made without the use of a key or special knowledge or effort at all times while the building or area served is occupied.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the above information, please contact the Fire Marshal's Office at 792-6360.

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