

PORTLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Prevention Bureau

380 Congress St.

Portland, ME 04101

207-874-8400





Jerome F. LaMoria
Fire Chief, Fire Department

- This guidance is general in nature and does not represent a thorough or complete statement of the Fire and Life Safety Codes.
- Refer to **City Code, Chapter 10, Fire Prevention and Protection** and Council adopted **NFPA standards**.
- More specific questions should be addressed to the Fire Prevention Bureau.

Portland, Maine



Yes. Life's good here.

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Fire Chief, Fire Department

- Definitions:



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- Definitions:
- NFPA-National Fire Protection Association
The world's leading advocate of fire prevention and an authoritative source on public safety, NFPA develops, publishes, and disseminates more than 300 consensus codes and standards intended to minimize the possibility and effects of fire and other risks.



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- **Definitions:**

NFPA-National Fire Protection Association

Dwelling Unit. One or more rooms arranged for complete, independent housekeeping.



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- Definitions:

Portland City Code Chapter 10 –

Fire Prevention and Protection

- Special hazard dwelling unit shall mean any structure containing twelve (12) or more dwelling units.
(Ord. No. 188-00, § 6, 4-24-00; Ord. No. 25-10/11, 8-16-10)



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Sec. 10-4. Special Hazard Dwelling Units.

(a) The following shall be located on-site in special hazard dwelling unit(s) in a fire resistant container and in a location fully accessible by the authority having jurisdiction at all times:

- (1) A detailed floor plan depicting the existing conditions of the building and, if available, a full set of building blueprints; and
- (2) Sufficient master keys to the building, as determined by the authority having jurisdiction; and
- (3) A list of special hazards within the building; and
- (4) Emergency contact information and location of any occupants requiring special assistance in the event of an emergency; and
- (5) Plans for new special hazard structures shall be filed with the authority having jurisdiction in an approved electronic format.
- (6) An approved sign shall be provided in a location approved by the authority having jurisdiction indicating the current building owner, property management company, or condominium association responsible for the building; and legal mailing address and phone number of said entity.

(b) Low proximity signage, identifying the number of each dwelling unit by number or letter or both, shall be installed on each access door as follows: The bottom of the sign shall be at least six (6) inches but not more than eight (8) inches above the floor. Letters and numerals shall be retro reflective, three (3) inches high and comply with 7.10.8.2 of the Life Safety Code.

(Ord. No. 188-00, § 6, 4-24-00; Ord. No. 25-10/11, 8-16-10; Ord. No. 215-11/12, 7-2-12)



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- Definitions: NFPA 1 Ch. 3, 3.2.2

Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ):

- An organization, office or individual responsible for enforcing the requirements of a code or standard, or for approving equipment, materials, an installation or a procedure.



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- Definitions: from Ch. 10 Portland City Code

Authority Having Jurisdiction:

Wherever the words “authority having jurisdiction” are used in the Life Safety Code, they shall be held to mean the Chief, of the Fire Department of the City of Portland, or his or her duly authorized representative.

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General Guidance for Code Compliance of Existing Apartment Buildings



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General Guidance for Code Compliance of Existing Apartment Buildings

Addressing

- All buildings must have approved, contrasting address numbers placed in a position to be plainly legible and visible from the street. Dwelling units and suites shall have similar markings indicating the unit or suite designation on the door.

Storage

- **No storage in the stairs and hallways.** This includes trash, bikes, appliances (including washers and dryers) and other personal items.
- **No storage of flammable or combustible liquids or flammable gasses in the building outside of listed lockers.**



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General Guidance for Code Compliance of Existing Apartment Buildings

Number of means of egress

- In **most cases 2 exits are required from each dwelling unit and egress windows are required from each sleeping room.** The two means of egress shall be arranged to minimize the possibility that both might be rendered impassable by the same emergency condition (fire, smoke, other). A dwelling unit with its own direct exit outside at grade and buildings less than 4 stories in height with a complete sprinkler system may have one exit.

Stairs

- Stairs, treads, risers, handrails and guards must be maintained. A minimum of one handrail is required on all existing stairs. Walls require a minimum 60-minute fire rating. Existing plaster and lath is acceptable when properly maintained. **Transoms, louvers and transfer grills are not permitted in stairwell walls.**



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Dwelling Unit/Basement Fire Doors

- Dwelling unit doors and basement **doors into the hallways or stairs must be fire rated and self-closing.**
A minimum of 2 self-closing hinges are required on each fire door. In most cases fire doors must be labeled for at least 60-minutes. *Existing buildings with complete sprinkler or fire alarm systems may be exempt from requiring fire rated doors but still must be self-closing and smoke tight.*



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Corridors

- Corridor walls require a minimum 30-minute fire rating with 20-minute fire door assemblies when separated from stairwells. If not separated from the stair they must meet the 60-minute wall and fire door stairwell requirements. Existing plaster and lath is acceptable when **properly maintained**. Transoms, louvers and transfer grills are not permitted in corridor walls



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Hazardous Area protection

- Fuel-fired heating equipment and/or more than 2 dryers outside of dwelling units are considered hazardous areas. Hazardous areas shall be protected with existing plaster and lath construction with a 60-minute self-closing fire door. If located in an unfinished basement, sprinkler coverage and a smoke tight basement ceiling may be allowed. Ceiling height shall be a minimum of 6'-8" for laundry spaces and travel distance to an exit shall be less than 25' unless two exits are provided



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Interior finish

- Interior finish for exits shall be Class A or B, or when the building has a complete sprinkler system Class C is permitted. Other spaces shall be permitted to have Class A, B or C finish. Unrated paneling is not permitted. New floor finish in non-sprinklered buildings shall be not less than Class II. New unrated carpeting is not permitted



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Fire alarm systems

- Fire alarm systems are required for buildings 4 or more stories in height or with more than 11 dwelling units. They may also be required systems for a number of reasons such as an equivalency to dwelling unit fire doors. Where they are provided they must be maintained by a certified master fire alarm company and have a current fire alarm inspection sticker.



Smoke Alarms

- 120 volt smoke alarms are required inside dwelling units: inside each sleeping room, immediately outside the sleeping rooms, and on each level of the dwelling unit. Smoke alarms have a 10-year life. New smoke alarms must be photoelectric and have battery backup. Interconnection of the alarms is not required except in the case of new construction or renovation.

Carbon Monoxide (CO) Alarms

- 120 volt CO alarms with battery backup are required inside dwelling units immediately outside the sleeping rooms, and on each level of the dwelling unit. CO alarms have a 5 or 7-year life. Interconnection of the alarms is not required except in the case of new construction or renovation.





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Fire extinguishers and sprinkler systems

- Where fire extinguishers and/or sprinkler systems are provided they shall be maintained and have a current inspection tag.





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General Guidance for Code Compliance of Existing Apartment Buildings

Knox Box

- Buildings with fire alarm or sprinkler systems require a Knox Box. Owners are strongly encouraged to use a master key system.



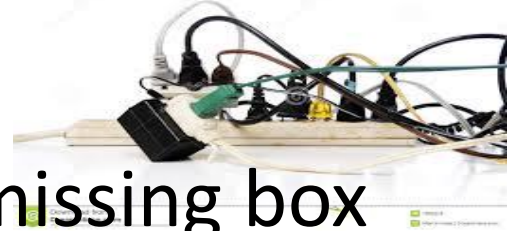


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Electrical

- No exposed electrical junctions, missing box covers or open fuse panels.
- Extension cords are only permitted for temporary use.



Apartment Building Check Sheet

Violation

Address

Egress

- Obstructions (NP) . _____
- Number of means of egress (see note) . _____
- Treads, rails and guards safe . _____
- Walls & ceilings are intact . _____
- Fire door assemblies (see note) . _____
- Transoms, louvers, or transom grills (NP) . _____
- Illumination . _____
- Emergency lighting (greater than 3 stories or 12 units) . _____
- Exit signs where exits are not apparent and obvious . _____
- Other : _____

Detection, Alarms and Extinguishment

- Fire alarm system (greater than 3 stories or 11 units) . _____
- Hardwired, single-station smoke alarms in dwelling units . _____
- Sprinkler system maintained if present . _____

Other necessary

- Boiler and other hazardous area protection (see note) . _____
- Paneling in common areas (NP) . _____
- Street numbers on front of building . _____
- Excessive storage of combustibles/flamables (NP) . _____
- Fire alarm system requires a Knox Box . _____
- Other : _____

Building Info

Stories above grade _____ Below grade _____ Number of units _____

Owner _____

Owner address _____

Phone number(s) _____

Date

Notes on back

Apartment Building Check Sheet

Number of means of egress

Each dwelling above the level of exit discharge must have two means of egress. The only exception to this is for an apartment building with no more than 3 stories above grade having an automatic sprinkler system and egress windows in each sleeping room.

Fire door assemblies

A fire door assembly is a listed and labeled door and frame and must be self-closing or automatic-closing.
A door opening from a unit, basement, or storage onto the same atmosphere as a common stair must be a 60-minute assembly.
A door opening from a unit, basement, or storage onto a common corridor, not in the same atmosphere as a stair, must be a 20-minute assembly.
Existing 1½ inch solid core doors with ¾ inch frame and self-closing hinges are acceptable for a 20-minute fire door assembly.

Boiler and hazardous area protection

The following areas require 1-hour separation or sprinklers:

- Boiler or fuel-fired heater rooms serving more than a single dwelling unit.
- Employee locker rooms.
- Gift or retail shops over 100 ft/sq.
- Bulk laundries.
- Laundries over 100 ft/sq outside of dwelling units.
- Maintenance shops
- Rooms or spaces used for storage of combustible supplies and equipment deemed hazardous by the authority having jurisdiction.
- Trash collection rooms.

Sprinkler piping serving not more than six sprinklers may be connected to a domestic water supply system having a capacity sufficient to provide 0.15 gallons per minute per square foot. An indicating shut-off valve shall be installed in an accessible location between the sprinkler and the connection to the domestic water supply. Minimum pipe size shall be ¾ inch copper OR 1 inch steel. Maximum coverage area of a residential sprinkler is 144 square feet per sprinkler. If protecting the hazardous area with sprinkler heads, the room must still be smoke proof.

Notes:



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NFPA Life Safety Code 101 Ch. 10, 10.11.6.2

– For other than one- and two-family dwellings;

No hibachi grill or other similar devices used for cooking shall be stored on a balcony.

