



## Bureau of Fire Prevention of the Borough of Englishtown

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### Common Fire Code Violations and Explanations.

- Locked or blocked exit doors or exit doors that require special knowledge or use of a key to exit is prohibited. (Example: An exit is locked on the exit side and needs a key to be unlocked)
- Additional unapproved locking means (locks are permitted however there is a limit of the number of actions to unlock and access the door) More than 1 action is prohibited.
- Storage and/or combustible storage in a means of egress (Combustible storage shall not be stored in parts of exits that would contribute to the spread of fire and block the ability to exit)
- Reducing the means of egress width from the original construction design (storage or fixtures installed in a means of egress can pose a life safety issue. Different buildings use has different widths. Essentially if the space is not specially designed for that intended use then storage should be avoided. Typically seen with storage in hallways/corridors.
- Use of extension cord as permanent wiring (Extension cords shall only be used with portable appliances. (Example: Vacuum or power tools/disconnect from power source after use)
- Plugging a surge protector into another surge protector (Surge protectors shall only be plugged directly to a wall outlet)
- Plugging unapproved appliances into surge protector (many appliances such as refrigerators and microwaves are not permitted to be plugged into surge protectors or extension cords. Ensure they are plugged in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions or direct to a wall outlet. Contact an electrician to add more outlets when needed.
- Missing outlet covers, switch covers, open electrical junction boxes (including side circular knockouts) electrical components shall be maintained with the electrical code.
- Portable space heaters shall not be plugged into extension cords or surge protectors. (Plug only directly to a wall outlet/Read the manufacturer's instructions before use)
- Storage shall be separate from heating equipment (Provide proper clearance of storage from heating equipment ex. Furnace, water heater, and personal portable heaters)
  - Propping fire doors open with unapproved hold open devices or wedges (Fire doors are specifically designed for safety and are required in some structures to limit fire and smoke spread to protect people and the building)

- Carbon monoxide detection shall be installed in areas that may have potential sources of carbon monoxide (Contact the Bureau of Fire Safety for more information) Existing construction and new construction have different requirements.
  - Exit signs shall be always illuminated and function on its backup power (Test your Exit Signs monthly for 30 seconds and for 1 hour annually) The signs shall be always illuminated. A log is required to be maintained at your location.
  - Emergency lighting shall function on loss of power and function on its backup power (Test your emergency lights monthly and on an annual basis)
  - Portable fire extinguishers shall be inspected annually by a NJ certified contractor and be properly mounted on the wall in a visible and unobstructed location.
  - Portable fire extinguishers shall be installed in specific locations (varies on hazards) (at a minimum fire extinguisher shall be mounted on every level and within 75 feet of travel distance. Distance and type of fire extinguishers while change based on a hazard assessment.
  - Electrical appliances, devices and fixture shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and shall not be altered in any unapproved manner.
  - Missing ceiling tiles or other penetrations in a fire-resistance rated construction. (These prevent fire or smoke from traveling into void spaces or into other rooms/compartments and are essential for fire protections systems functioning properly) Fill these penetrations with the proper and approved material. Be careful as some products appear to be the correct ones but do not provide the proper protection and are for different uses. Always ask your inspector if the material you want to use is for the proper application. Create an account free account at <https://iq.ulprospector.com/en/> and this will assist you to use the proper combination of materials for the specific penetration. Fire stopping is complex and should only be conducted by someone who has a working knowledge of fire rated assemblies and systems. If fire rated assemblies and systems are not understood, then the repair should not be done by that person or agent.
  - Clearance of electrical panels and equipment shall always be maintained. (Storage in front of electrical equipment can be a fire hazard, delay firefighter operations or service personal to address a hazard)
  - Fire doors and smoke doors shall be maintained in an approved and working manner. Fire doors shall latch and close from any position with the proper door hardware utilized for their operation. These doors create compartments to reduce the spread of fire and smoke.
- Fire doors and smoke doors fire rating shall be maintained, and their labels shall not be painted over. This label is found usually on the door frame and on the side of the door, usually the hinge side. These labels indicate the level of protection they provide as well as proof they are listed by a regulated listing agency.
- Storage shall not be kept under stairways because it can create a hazard for occupants attempting to evacuate a structure in the event of a fire. Combustible storage such as paper or plastic shall not be stored under stairways. No storage shall be in protected (enclosed) stairways that are specifically designed for occupants to exit or shelter in places that may be waiting to be rescued by emergency personnel.

- Sprinkler systems shall be maintained in accordance with the original installation standard. Ensure your sprinkler system is maintained. Any building alterations should receive approval from the construction office to prevent potential sprinkler coverage issues or reducing the effectiveness of the suppression system. Ensure you have the past 3 years maintained at your facility.
- Smoke detection systems shall be maintained in accordance with the original installation standard. Ensure your fire alarm system is maintained. Any building alterations should receive approval from the construction office to prevent potential smoke detector coverage issues or reducing the effectiveness of the fire alarm system. Ensure you have the past 3 years maintained at your facility.
- Improper storage of oily rags, which could result in spontaneous combustion. Oily rags shall be stored in an approved self-closing metal container.
- Appliances and all of their components including wiring shall not be altered unless approval has been granted from the manufacturer and shall be done in accordance with all codes and standards. Altering an appliance may void its listing and create a fire code violation. Do not make appliance cords longer and change out the power cords unless approval is received.
- Wall and ceiling decorations above a certain percentage create a fire hazard by increasing the "fuel load" in a structure or space giving a fire the ability to rapidly spread and impede evacuation. Ask your local enforcing agency about the regulations of decorative materials.
- Any cooking operation that produces grease laden vapors (cooking with any type of fat or foods that contain fat) shall have an approved hood (ventilation) and suppression system.
- Electrical Rooms and Mechanical Rooms shall be labeled with a proper sign. (For Electrical Rooms Label the exterior door "ELECTRICAL ROOM" and Mechanical Rooms "MECHANICAL ROOM". Ensure the sign is durable, secure, and readily visible.)