

# Fire Inspection Fee Program

Fire personnel inspect multifamily and commercial buildings to make sure there are working sprinklers, alarms and other provisions that prevent or mitigate fires.

Fire inspections are a best practice for the safety of the people who live in multifamily buildings and work in commercial ones. With the growth the city is experiencing, a fee is necessary for us to maintain our current service level. The building owner is responsible for the fee. The City Council approved the fee beginning January 1, 2020.

## How is the fee calculated?

The fire inspection fee, assessed at the time of inspection, is a function of three factors:

- Base rate
- Square footage to be inspected
- Occupancy classification

Inspection Fee = base rate \* square footage factor \* occupancy factor

## Base Rate

The base rate is currently \$180. The rate is set by the City Council and reviewed every two years or as otherwise necessary to recover the costs of the fire inspection program. The base rate is adjusted for three reasons:

- to account for inflation,
- commercial and multifamily square footage subject to fire inspection being added in Bellevue
- to support additional fire inspection resources or personnel necessary to perform fire inspections on a regular basis.

## Square Footage Factor

The building's square footage is assigned a number based on the following:

- 0 = Under 1,000 square feet
- 1 = 1,000 square feet or larger up to;
- 2 = 3,000 square feet or larger up to;
- 3 = 10,000 square feet or larger up to;
- 4 = 40,000 square feet or larger up to;
- 5 = 80,000 square feet or larger up to;
- 6 = 100,000 square feet or larger.

## Occupancy Factor

The occupancy factor is determined by the building's occupancy type. All occupancy classifications are in accordance with the International Building Code as amended by Washington State Administrative Code Chapter 51-50. For mixed-occupancy buildings, the predominate use based on square footage shall be used to determine the occupancy factor:

- 0.1 Group R Townhomes and single-story Group S self-storage warehouses.
- 0.3 Group R Buildings not exceeding three stories in height; Group S self-storage warehouses not exceeding three stories in height
- 1.0 All buildings or portions of buildings classified as Group B, M, R (not to include Group R Division 3) and U occupancies.
- 2.0 All buildings or portions of buildings classified as Group A, E, S or LC occupancies

3.0 All buildings classified as high-rise buildings; all covered mall buildings not to include anchor stores; all buildings or portions of buildings classified as Group F, H or I occupancies.

## Inspection Frequency

The inspection frequency is determined by a combination of resources, risk and occupancy-based fire history:

Occupancy	Inspection Frequency
Hazardous Occupancies	Every 6 months
Multifamily buildings lacking a fire sprinkler system	Annually
Buildings containing restaurants lacking a fire sprinkler system	Annually
All other buildings	Every other year

## Covered Mall Buildings

The square footage for covered mall buildings doesn't include anchor buildings, which are assessed separately. For a covered mall building 500,000 square feet or larger, the square footage factor shall be as follows:

- #7= 500,000 square feet or larger up to;
- #8 = 750,000 square feet or larger up to;
- #9 = 1,000,000 square feet or larger.

## Multiple High-Rise Buildings with Common Podiums

When multiple high-rise buildings are located above a common podium, the associated parking garage and podium areas shall be assigned an occupancy factor of 2 and treated as one building.

## Complex Fee

Where multiple buildings have a common owner and comprise a single complex (Group E or R occupancies that do not exceed four stories in height), the maximum fee will be \$3,240.

## Exemptions

1. Buildings owned by nonprofit organizations exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code
2. Buildings less than 1,000 square feet
3. Recognized federal agencies

## Re-inspections

The fire inspection fee covers the initial inspection and one re-inspection visit, if necessary. Any additional follow-up inspections will be charged at an hourly rate.

## Additional Information

You can consult the city's website ([BellevueWA.gov/fire-inspection-fees](http://BellevueWA.gov/fire-inspection-fees)), call Fire Marshal Ken Carlson (425-452-6874) or email [Fire\\_Prevention@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:Fire_Prevention@bellevuewa.gov).



For alternate formats, interpreters, or reasonable accommodation requests please phone at least 48 hours in advance 425-452-6872 (voice) or email [fire\\_prevention@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:fire_prevention@bellevuewa.gov). For complaints regarding accommodations, contact City of Bellevue ADA/Title VI Administrator at 425-452-6168 (voice) or email [ADATitleVI@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:ADATitleVI@bellevuewa.gov). If you are deaf or hard of hearing dial 711. All meetings are wheelchair accessible.