BACKGROUND

Building inspection presents a practical opportunity to identify code violations in a building, ensure the violations are corrected, educate key people in operational safety aspects for the building and develop a better understanding within the building trades and other related professionals. In order to take advantage of this opportunity, ensure that violations are corrected and maximize the results of an inspection, it is necessary to prepare for the inspection, understand potential fire spread and human behavior during a fire, systematically inspect the building, research any necessary issues, document the inspection, effectively communicate with all parties involved and use follow up procedures to make sure violations are corrected.

Inspectors should be as well prepared as possible for the inspection. It is helpful to review previous inspection reports for the particular occupancy in order to become familiar with the hazards that are likely to be found. If inspections have not been conducted, the building plans and specifications may be available. It is also helpful to review sections of the applicable codes for the particular type of occupancy.

Records are stored at Station One and are filed by property address. The Vermont Division of Fire Safety Office (Springfield) also has records of variances. The State’s records also indicate periodic inspections of boilers, pressure vessels, fire protection systems, etc. The Vermont Division of Fire Safety office stores outdated records State General Service Center, Public Records Division, and may be available upon request.

EQUIPMENT

The inspector should always consider personal safety when making an inspection. For instance, if the area is under construction or overhead hazards are anticipated, a hard hat must be worn as a preventive measure. No matter what type of occupancy is being inspected, common sense and general safety awareness should be routine procedures to prevent unnecessary injury.

Standard or specialized equipment are needed to conduct an effective and efficient inspection. Examples of equipment are tape measure, camera, calculator, pitot gauge, pressure gages, gas detectors, forms, reference books and a flashlight.
GENERAL
In preparing for an inspection and throughout an inspection it is important to be knowledgeable about how fire travels through a building, human behavior during a fire, employees who may be involved in operations of the building and special risks that might involve specialty areas of inspection. A building opening such as a stairway provides an obvious path for a fire to spread, but inspectors in all specialty areas need to recognize basic risks to the building occupants. Basic risks include the fire spread potential from other typical openings for a wire or pipe, an electrical wiring hazard next to an obvious grounding source, plumbing changes that are made in food preparation areas or boiler safety devices that are not operational.

Human behavior during a fire or other emergency, although sometimes erratic and irrational, is predictable. This behavior is a logical attempt to deal with a complex, rapidly changing situation in which minimal information for action is available. Behavior during a fire follows a predictable sequence, beginning with detection of the fire, definition of the situation and using coping behavior. Despite the highly stressful situation, most individuals involved in a fire respond in a relatively rational manner. They might notify others, search for the source of the fire, or start to combat the fire. Unfortunately, they can be misled by ambiguous fire clues, and confused by toxic gases from the fire. In short, their limited knowledge about the rapidly changing environment around them further complicates their chance for survival. It is vitally important that the inspector keep these likely behaviors in mind during an inspection. In this way, the inspector can help to ensure that the occupancy is as safe as possible.

Establishing a favorable atmosphere with the people the inspector will be working with plays an important role in conducting an inspection. The manner of dress of inspectors is a factor that may have a bearing on the amount of cooperation they can expect. Clothing and appearance should be practical for the work to be done whether existing building, new construction, and post fire or disaster inspection. Whether wearing a department jacket, shirt or other clothing, the inspector should be neat and professional in appearance.

The attitude that inspection personnel have toward the inspection itself also plays a part in establishing a favorable atmosphere. A positive attitude will usually encourage a positive reaction from the occupant. Inspectors should approach the inspection with the attitude of helping to keep the occupancy safe from hazards. Such an attitude will help to promote a high degree of cooperation and compliance from the occupant or owner.

PROCEDURES
Whenever possible the inspector should pre-schedule the inspection, which will also help inspectors to make a good initial impression. They should make prior contact with the property owner to set an inspection date and time. If it is not possible to keep an appointment, or the inspector will be late, the inspector should
notify the person they are planning to meet.

Upon arrival at the inspection site, the inspector should contact the owner/occupant or tradesperson involved and confirm the appointment. The inspector should then give a briefing detailing the inspection procedure. Routine inspections should not be attempted without permission from the owner or occupant.

It is important to be able to speak effectively and positively and to have good listening skills when conducting an inspection. These skills enable inspectors to determine if the occupant understands what has been discussed and gives the inspector informal clues on whether the communication is effective. Furthermore, if the occupant participates in developing solutions to the problems, he or she is more likely to comply with the requirements outlined by the inspector.

There will be times when the inspector does not know the answer to a question. When that is the case let the person know that you don’t have the answer but you can research the question and get back to them. Be sure to get back to them within a few days to maintain your credibility.

There is no set route that inspectors must follow when conducting an inspection, however, inspections must be systematic and thorough. No area should be omitted when conducting a complete building inspection. If alterations or a complaint focus on one area of a building then the inspection can be limited to that area of the building if inspection has been conducted and properly followed up on within five (5) years. If there has been no inspection within the last five years, the entire building must be inspected. If the electrical or plumbing work results in violations in the existing building systems, or if there are imminent hazards in those systems, the scope of the electrical or plumbing inspection must include the entire building.

It is common for the inspection to begin with an examination of the exterior of the building. During the exterior inspection, inspectors collect information about the building dimensions, construction materials, exposures, water sources, hydrants, valves and the surrounding area. The location of doors, windows and fire escapes can be noted at this time.

After the preliminary review of the exterior of the building, the interior inspection should begin at the lowest level and proceed systematically to the highest level. This allows the inspector an understanding of the building egress system as the inspection is conducted, with less need to retrace steps and look at an area a second time. For electrical and plumbing inspectors, it may also be beneficial to begin the inspection at the service entry and follow the systems through the building. Boiler inspectors should begin the inspection with the source of fuel, the venting for the unit and the area where the unit is installed.
When the inspection is complete, the inspector should discuss the results with the responsible party for the property. The purpose of this closing interview is to note good conditions as well as discuss those conditions that need correcting. The reactions of the person responsible for the building will vary. Some will welcome the inspection report and usually work immediately to correct the hazards noted. The majority will accept the report as part of the routine of doing business. Most of them will move toward compliance.

Some individuals will display hostility toward the inspector’s remarks and recommendations. In these instances, the inspector should be polite but firm and avoid arguments. In every instance, the inspectors should use the closing interview to express thanks for any courtesies extended. If a re-inspection will be necessary, the inspector should inform the owner/occupant that it will be made. Inspectors must use their judgment, but for those who are reluctant to comply with the codes, it may be necessary to explain the enforcement procedure and appeal process.

Follow up inspections are made to ensure that the violations noted in the inspection report have been corrected. Inspectors should confirm the time and date of the re-inspection with the occupant on arrival. It is likely to be unnecessary for the inspector to conduct a complete inspection but only to inspect the problem areas included in the previous inspection report to verify that the hazards have been corrected. Construction and electrical inspections may need to cover the complete building due to work that has been completed since the previous inspection.

If all hazards have been corrected, the inspector should complete the proper documentation to close out the file. This also gives the inspector an additional opportunity to thank the owner/occupant or contractor for cooperating.

If some hazards remain to be corrected but the owner/occupant or contractor is making a conscientious effort to comply, they should be complimented for the progress that has been made. The inspector can set a date for another follow-up inspection or complete the proper documentation if the building will not be re-inspected due to a low hazard or low risk.

If the hazards have not been corrected and it is apparent that the owner/occupant or contractor is making no effort to correct them, the inspector should use proper documentation to set a date for another inspection and/or inform the owner/occupant or contractor exactly what action will be taken if full compliance is not attained by the date specified.

**DOCUMENTATION**

All inspections must be properly documented to establish the framework to ensure that code violations are corrected, including future enforcement actions, to protect
the liability of the inspector and the Town, and to follow due process for people involved with inspections.

Documentation may include completed inspection reports, letters, email, fire data base entries, photographs, maps, sketches and field notes. Most documentation becomes a matter of public record. Where the information is part of an ongoing investigation, or protected trade secrets, the request is referred to the regional manager who may consult with legal counsel in regards to the request.

The first site inspection normally necessitates gathering general information for the building. Electrical and plumbing inspection reports focus specifically on the proposed work to be done. Information gathered for the boiler report focuses on detailed information for the boiler or pressure vessel.

The fire inspection report, long form, has a number of fields of information that need to be completed to properly document a building. If the property has been previously inspected, the inspector has the option of preprinting the fire inspection form from the fire data base system and then adding or editing the information during the inspection, or completing a new long form inspection report and comparing that information to the database during the data entry phase. The boiler inspector has the same options to update information on boilers or pressure vessels.

Once baseline data has been established, a fire inspection report short form may be used where there is a limited amount of information to document during follow up inspections. Similarly, a boiler/pressure vessel inspection report may be used to document violations without completely checking all fields of information when the follow-up inspection occurs within 90 days.

The electrical and plumbing inspection reports contain information directed at the work permitted to be done. Besides completing the information for the inspection report the work on site must be compared to the scope of the work contained under the work notice and the work notice modified where there is any substantial difference.

The inspection report may be in a letter format due to the complexity or volume of information contained in a field report. The letter may reference the site number and project, boiler/pressure vessel ID number or work notice number.

Documentation of an inspection may also be accomplished by electronic mail. When more than one inspector is involved in an inspection an inspector may send electronic mail containing observations or violations to the inspector/manager who is preparing the inspection report.

All inspections must be entered into the fire data base system. The fire database also offers events to document phone conversations, comments and similar
events.

Photographs are sometimes necessary when major discrepancies or problems are found during an inspection. Photographs are useful because they provide a record of conditions at the time of the inspection. Diagrams and sketches show the objects in the area of relative setting, but nothing has the effect of a photograph—especially if court proceedings follow the inspection.

Careful, accurate records are necessary to document when and where the photographs are taken. For complex issues, it may be necessary to record the location of the photograph on a sketch of the building, or a sketch might be important in recording other critical information. Normally resources will not be available to develop drawings or sketches to scale. Be sure to note on the sketch “not to scale”, and provide indications such as street locations or a north arrow so that someone reviewing the sketch can relate it to the building. Include notes to clarify what the sketch is intended to show.

The owner or responsible party is sent or hand delivered the inspection report and memorandum entitled “Inspection Process”. To facilitate response to documentation of an inspection, make sure that all involved parties receive a copy. Fire and boiler/pressure vessel reports are normally addressed to the building owner. Where violations involve a tenant, the tenant must also receive a copy. For electrical and plumbing inspection reports, the report is addressed to the licensed tradesperson with a copy to the owner, and the tenant if applicable. Additional parties who may need to know the inspection results include the fire chief, or other local official, contractor, subcontractor, architect or engineer, etc.

**RISK INDEX**

The chart entitled “Risk Index by Exposure to Life Safety” is to be used in determining priority of inspections to be conducted. This includes routine, construction, operational, complaint and annual inspections.

The intent of the Risk Index Chart is to prioritize inspection request and follow up inspections so that higher risk occupancies receive greater attention and allocation of resources.

The H1 and H2 classifications are given the highest priority, followed by M1 and M2.

The H3 and M3 classifications are to be given a lower priority and generally be inspected only after a construction permit is issued or if a complaint is received. The L2 and L3 classifications are generally inspected only upon complaint.
Table: Risk Index By Exposure To Life Safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RISK FACTOR</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>H – HIGH</strong></td>
<td>Residential buildings combined with other occupancies, and</td>
<td>Assembly &gt; 300 Occupants Including Tents Child Care Facilities Educational</td>
<td>Mercantile, Business, Storage, Industrial &gt; 30,000 Sq. Ft. Buildings with areas classified as hazardous under NEC Art. 501-503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Apartments Lodging &amp; Rooming Hotels Dormitories Residential Board &amp; Care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M – MEDIUM</strong></td>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Family Dwelling Nursing Homes Hospitals Correctional Facilities</td>
<td>Assembly &lt; 300 occupants Including tents Special Structures Enclosed Towers Underground Structures Windowless Special Amusement High Rise Occupancies</td>
<td>Mercantile, Business, Storage, Industrial, 12,000 – 30,000 Sq. Ft. Bulk Fuel Facilities Other High Hazard Occupancies College Classrooms &amp; Labs, in buildings &gt;12,000 Sq. Ft.</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>L – LOW</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assembly &lt; 50 Occupants Fast Food Restaurants College Classrooms &amp; Labs, in buildings &lt;12,000 Sq. Ft.</td>
<td>Mercantile, Business, Storage, Industrial, &lt; 12,000 Sq. Ft. Temporary Structures</td>
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**HIGH RISK**
For mixed use buildings, use the “higher risk index” with “901 Code”. Sq. Ft. is based on building “foot print”.

**INSPECTION IN RESPONSE TO A COMPLAINT**

**GENERAL**
Inspection in response to complaint often offers an opportunity to provide for the safety of people in high risk or high hazard buildings or premises, but inspections in response to complaints may also be time consuming and direct resources away from higher priority work because it may be difficult to initially evaluate the validity of a complaint. The person who receives the complaint needs to document:

- Call back number for the person making the complaints
- Location of the building or premise
- Use of the building or premise
- Owner, agent, tenant of the building
- Nature of the violations alleged in the complaint; specifics may help in evaluating the priority of the complaint.
- Fill out a complaint form.
The person receiving the complaint needs to express genuine interest in the complaint and treat the complaint in a professional manner. This will assist in obtaining adequate information and evaluating the validity and urgency of the complaint.

**PROCEDURE**

When all required information has been documented, the person receiving the complaint may refer the complainant directly to the Fire Marshal or the on duty shift officer and enter the complaint event in the fire database. If the person receiving the complaint is not able to document the required information, is unsure of the urgency of the complaint, or the complaint is determined to be urgent, the referral is made directly to the Fire Marshal. When the complaint is urgent, the referral needs to be made in person, by telephone, voice mail or pager.

When evaluating a complaint, the priority (See section 1.6), number of occupants and the alleged hazards must all be considered.

All complaints received with a risk index of H1 or H2 must be inspected regardless of the number of occupants or alleged risks, although those factors may be considered when scheduling an inspection. All other complaints should be inspected unless the alleged hazard(s) can otherwise be ruled out or the alleged hazard is not of a serious nature. When responding to complaints, the Fire Marshal does not need to give advance notice to the owner/tenant if it might obscure any alleged hazards.

Inspection procedure and documentation otherwise follows sections 1 and/or 3.

**SPECIAL OPERATIONAL INSTRUCTIONS**

**GENERAL**

Site inspections of Places of Assembly and other high/medium risk occupancies may need to be conducted because of unique circumstances that occur during periods of the greatest use of the facility and/or at a time when the occupants are most at risk.

This includes inspections of occupancies listed on the Risk Index Chart (H1, H2, M1, M2). Occupancies such as night clubs, restaurants, places of assembly, theaters, concerts, exhibits, trade shows, temporary amusement structures, correctional facilities & health care facilities need to be inspected during the night or early morning hours to identify particular hazards or operational violations. Other occupancies such as hotel/motels, dormitories, rooming & lodging, board and care or buildings in other risk classifications may be conducted for specific complaints.

These inspections should focus on operational issues and not on general
requirements. General requirements should have been addressed at a previous inspection during normal business hours, or if new issues are identified regarding general requirements they should be followed up at a subsequent inspection during normal business hours.

Inspection during peak occupancy or period of peak risk should include issues such as:

- Fire access for fire department equipment including unobstructed fire lanes
- Identification of exits
- Usability of exits
- Illumination of exits
- Occupant load and overcrowding
- Maintenance of aisles which serve exits
- Operational readiness of fire suppression, fire protection, fire detection and alarm systems
- Staff knowledge or emergency plan and operation
- Any hazardous conditions or equipment

Inspections conducted outside of normal business hours may be conducted by qualified personnel with the approval of the Fire Chief.

Personnel conducting inspections outside of normal business hours must have their identification card available to establish proper identification with the building owner or tenant. The wearing of Fire department jackets or shirts during the inspection will be determined by the Fire Chief. If division clothing is not worn during the inspection, it shall be available to be worn if the situation warrants its use. Safety equipment shall always be worn as required or as appropriate.

Restrictions placed on building use and/or closure shall be reported to the Fire Chief and Fire Marshal. The regional manager of the Vermont Division of Fire Safety will be informed of building closures due to fire code violations.

**DOCUMENTATION**

The documentation of the inspection can be written on either the Fire Prevention Inspection Results Form or the Order to Eliminate Dangerous or Hazardous Conditions Form. The Order to Eliminate Dangerous or Hazardous Conditions Form should be used for serious violations requiring immediate (less than 24 hours) attention.

**REVIEW OF CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS**

**GENERAL**

The review of construction of documents; such as plans, specifications, shop
drawings, schedules, etc., is a proactive process to identify any potential problems and code violation prior to the start of actual construction when it is easier to change the plans and correct code violations. The cooperative relationship established and the assistance provided during the plan review process presents a positive image of the Fire Chief Fire Marshal and the Department.

The review process presents an opportunity to educate the applicant, designer and/or builder on the need for public safety and the intent of the code and its development; as well as the improved usability of building when buildings are made accessible. However, education and consultation during the plan review process needs to be balanced considering the benefits for public safety and resources available for plan review. For instance, it is appropriate to provide additional assistance to the applicant for a H1 building to ensure the public safety and equally appropriate to require the applicant for a L3 building to obtain additional assistance from the private sector. When considering resources available for plan review the total resources needed to advance a project from the planning stage to occupancy of the building also are important. If an issue can be resolved at the plan review stage instead of becoming a variance issue or enforcement issues it is both more effective for the Division and its stakeholder.

This concept is recognized for renovation and alternation projects in historical or State of Vermont designated “downtown” districts. Vermont Division of Fire Safety Regional Managers have been designed as downtown development specialist to assist with public safety and development specialist to assist with public safety and development in downtown areas. Tax credits are available to property owners for sprinklers and other fire code improvements. The Regional Manager should be consulted on projects that fall in this category.

**PROCEDURE**

Unless specifically waived by the Fire Chief, all construction, renovation, alteration and installation of new equipment under the fire and accessibility codes are required to have construction documents reviewed prior to a permit being issued and work beginning on the project.

The State issues permits for electrical, plumbing and boiler projects. The State may allow work to begin after the responsible State Inspector has been notified of the work without construction documents being reviewed. Plans or other construction documents may be required by the inspector when needed to evaluate work in progress. This portion of the operation manual is directed at the review of construction documents under the fire and accessibility codes but is equally relevant for work under the electrical, plumbing and boiler codes when plans are reviewed.

The requirement for the submittal of construction documents can be waived. However, the requirement to obtain a construction permit along with the fee normally cannot be waived. The decision to waive the submittal of construction
documents under the fire and accessibility codes may be based on the complexity of the project, the familiarity of the applicant with the codes, the relative risk to the public from the project or the relationship of the project to the existing building which may justify a site inspection rather than a review of plans.

The review of construction documents by the Fire Prevention Division is often one of the last requirements before construction starts on a project. Because of the cyclic nature of construction and the limits on resources, a reasonable time frame is needed for construction documents to be reviewed. The goal is to review plans within 10 days of receipt.

The Vermont Fire Prevention and Building Code requires that construction documents submitted for a construction permit be sufficiently clear, comprehensive and prepared in enough detail, so that the Inspector who is familiar with construction and plans can readily determine whether or not the construction documents conform to the code. That section of the code has specifically been written to provide general guidance to the submitter and reviewer but does not list a minimum set of criteria for submission. This reflects the philosophy of the Division to work with projects submitted by a broad spectrum of stakeholders including owners who know the project but not design protocol, a designer who knows a special trade but not all phases of construction or a professional architect or engineer who is trained in all aspects of construction. The reviewer should work cooperatively with the strengths of the applicant without making unnecessary demands for the preparation of plans, while at the same time ensuring adequate plans are received for efficient review and that will document those issues needed to ensure the public safety.

The review of construction documents should proceed in a systematic process similar to site inspection. A typical process would start with a review of the site plan showing the location and access to the building and an understanding of the outside of the building. Subsequent review would then focus on the concepts of the construction of the building and the relationship to its use, height and area. For new construction, a determination whether the building can be built based on height and area limitation and water supply should be made before proceeding further with the review. The process should then focus on the arrangement of the building, means of egress, construction details, building systems, and material specifications. The plan reviewer may/should want to note applicable code sections during the review to assist with documentation later on.

The results of the review are categorized into the one of these areas:

- Permitted: The construction documents demonstrate familiarity with the codes and general compliance with the codes. There may be areas of noncompliance, or areas of incomplete information. The project can be permitted with violations noted when the violations are easily evaluated and or corrected at site inspection and/or the impact of noncompliance is
minimum. For example, the location of fire extinguishers can be addressed at site inspections.

Conditional Permit: The construction documents contain one or more areas of noncompliance, or areas of incomplete information, that impacts the project and would be difficult to correct at final inspection; however, the items do not affect the startup of the project. Major issues on a conditional permit need to be addressed by the applicant prior to completion of the project and the reviewer should track these major issues to make sure the applicant does respond. For example, the details of construction of a fire separation wall would need to be addressed prior to completion of interior finish work could commence on the foundation and shell of the building.

Permit Denied: The construction document contains one or more major areas of noncompliance, or areas of incomplete information, that affects the concept and feasibility of starting construction on the building before determining a solution to the issue(s). When a permit is denied the applicant must resolve and resubmit construction documents prior to construction. It is good practice to contact the applicant by phone to advise the applicant of the issue. If a project has illegally started construction and the construction permit is denied a Stop Work order is issued following the procedure in Section 5. For example, where a building exceeds the area limitations the construction type would be subject to charge, or a fire wall(s) would need to be constructed. Either solution could impact the design of the foundation so it is necessary to deny the permit, and stop work if work has commenced, until a solution is developed.

**DOCUMENTATION**

Documentation is necessary during all steps of the plan review process. To facilitate coordination, and compliance with any necessary changes, all parties involved should receive a copy of the plan review letter. The letter is addressed to the applicant, which is normally the owner, or an agent for the owner such as an architect. If someone besides the owner is the applicant the owner always receives a copy. The applicant and/or owner also receive a copy of the memorandum entitled “Accessibility for People with Disabilities”. In addition, the builder who is doing the work receives a copy along with the fire chief so that the fire department responding to the building will be aware of changes in the building.

A. Others who may need to receive a copy of the letter include tenants, Hartford Planning and Zoning Department, department of Education, Department of Aging and Disabilities, Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services,. Smoke alarms shall be installed. One in the living room on the high point of the ceiling or on a wall 4-12 inches from the high point of the ceiling and the other(s) on each level that has a bedroom (outside the bedrooms). The smoke alarms shall receive their operating power from the buildings electrical service.
At a minimum, the plan review letter needs to contain the name of the applicant, the name, location and site number of the project, the date the construction documents were received and the date they were reviewed, the scope of work to be covered by the project, construction classification of the building, occupancy classification of the building, which codes govern the review, comments and violations noted during the review and the reviewers name and contact information. Applicable code sections need to be included for each violation noted. In addition to the plan review letter, the permit form, which is posted at the building, is completed by the reviewer. The authorization numbers for the permit is the computer-generated even number, which coordinates the permit with the fire database. The supplemental documents on accessibility also needs to be included with the plan review letter sent to the stakeholder, when the construction project is under the scope of the access rules.

Documentation does not begin or end with the plan review letter. The substance of telephone calls, meetings or research needs to be documents in the project file or using the “phone” or “comment” section of the “fire database”.

VARIANCES
A variance is a request to use a different solution for compliance with the intent of the code. Requests for variances are submitted to the Vermont Division of Fire Safety and the Hartford Fire Department Fire Prevention Division.

Requests for variances shall include:
Evidence that the proposed building or premise is not in compliance with the code.

Evidence, letters, statements test results, construction documents or other supporting information to justify the request.

Evidence that strict compliance with the code would entail practical difficulty, unnecessary hardship, or otherwise found unwarranted.

Evidence that any such variance or exemption secures the public safety and health and that the methods, means or practices proposed provide equal protection of the public safety and health.

The Fire Prevention Division and Fire Chief shall review the variance request and forward it to the Vermont Division of Fire Safety Office with comments and recommendations for approval or disapproval.

STOP WORK ORDER
A Stop Work Order is an enforcement tool to be used to protect the public safety by not allowing construction or an installation to be done in violation of the Code.
A Stop Work Order may be issued for a project being constructed or installed:
  That is causing a life safety hazard to the occupants of the building.
  In violation of the Code.
  Contrary to the permitted plans.
  Without a Construction Permit being issued.
  Beyond the limits of a Conditional Construction Permit.

A Stop Work Order may be issued to stop all work on a project or for a specific item or system.

The Assistant Fire Marshal/inspector should utilize discretionary authority when issuing a Stop Work Order. Items to consider include: the requirements for occupancy during construction, the risk or hazards associated with the construction or installation, scope and extent of the violation, the difficulty of correcting the violation at a later date if work continues, knowledge by the owner or representative of Code requirements, structural stability of the building, or weather protection of the construction or installation.

Prior to the issuance of a Stop Work Order, the Inspector must contact the Fire Chief to inform him of this action. The State Fire Prevention Regional Manager should be notified.

A written notice must be provided to the owner and to parties responsible for causing the violation. This written notice must document the violation and what must be done to correct it.

A Stop Work Order poster must be posted at the site in a location visible from the public way and posted to conceal a Construction or Conditional permit, if they exist.

Updated: 3/21/07
1/4/13