



Pinellas Suncoast Fire & Rescue

304 1st St., Indian Rocks Beach, Florida 33785

Short-Term Rental Life Safety Inspection

Frequently Asked Questions

- Q: Am I required to install hard-wired smoke detectors in my short-term rental? Where should they be placed?
- A: If your short-term rental is in a single-family home or duplex, you must hard-wire your smoke detectors. You will have 365 days to complete this task from your initial registration date. Hard-wired detectors are not required if your rental is any other property subject to fire inspections. However, you must keep a smoke detector log if you do not have hard-wired smoke detectors (See Note 1). The district may request these forms at any time, and failure to produce these logs will constitute a fire code violation. A sample form can be downloaded from our website. For placement, see Note 2.
- Q: Am I required to have specialized smoke detectors for the deaf and hearing-impaired?
- A: Yes, specialized smoke detectors for the deaf and hearing-impaired, as required by Section 509.215(6), F.S., shall be listed by a nationally recognized testing laboratory for the intended use and have a visual signaling appliance that has an effective intensity rating of at least 100 candela. This type of detector is not required to be hard-wired.
- Q: What type/size of fire extinguisher(s) am I required to install?
- A: Any extinguisher that is purchased must be a Type ABC. The other requirement is that whichever extinguisher(s) are purchased, they must be able to be annually inspected and serviced, if necessary, by a certified fire extinguisher company. We recommend a minimum of a 5lb 2A:10BC. There must be one on each floor, and they must be mounted no higher than 48" from the floor and no lower than 4" from any surface. They must always be visible to guests.
- Q: Am I required to install battery-powered emergency lighting and exit signage?
- A: If your short-term rental is in a single-family home or duplex, you must install hard-wired emergency lighting at each building exit that will illuminate automatically for a minimum of 90 minutes. In addition to this lighting requirement, an "EXIT" sign shall be installed. This sign can be illuminated by emergency lighting or incorporated into the emergency lighting system. Mounting of a sign or lighting is not required at the secondary exit if it is a window.
- Q: Am I required to install a CO detector? If so, where should it be installed?
- A: If your short-term rental is in a single-family home or duplex with a garage and/or gas-operated appliances, including water heaters, you must install at least one CO detector on each floor. You may use the manufacturer's placement instructions or the internet to guide CO detector location.

Q: Am I required to provide two means of egress (exits) in my short-term rental?

A: If your short-term rental is in a single-family home or duplex, you must provide a primary and secondary exit. These exits will be the ones that will be identified with the exit signs and lights. Most often, the primary exit is the front door. A secondary exit can be one of the following:

1. A door, stairway, or ramp providing a way of unobstructed exit travel to the outside of the dwelling, recreational vehicle, or mobile home at street or ground level that is independent of and remote from the primary means of exit; or
2. An outside window or door operable from the inside, without the use of tools or special equipment, that provides a clear opening having a minimum of 5.7 square feet of area with no dimension less than 20 inches in width or 24 inches in height. The bottom of the opening shall be at most 44 inches off the floor. The opening must be directly accessible to the fire department rescue apparatus or extension ladder.
3. If the secondary exit is a window, an exit sign and emergency lighting are not required to be installed at that location.

Q: How do I create an evacuation plan?

A: One of our residents has graciously provided us with a copy of their plan, which can be viewed on our website. For more information, FEMA has provided an excellent guide to creating an emergency evacuation plan. Please follow the link or perform a web search for “FEMA creating evacuation diagram.” <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/blog/cb-052417.html>

Q: How can I practice electrical safety in my Short-Term Rental?

A: One of the most common violations seen during a fire inspection is the improper use of extension cords and multiplug adapters. Due to this, only fused power strips are to be utilized within a rental. Other common findings are power strips plugged into power strips and appliances that are run off extension cords or plugged into power strips which is also not permitted. While the device on the left would be permitted if UL listed, the amount of counterfeit UL devices on the market leads us to discourage their use entirely; if you insist on using these adapters, the UL listing must be supplied to the district. When choosing power strips, we recommend purchasing brand-name products rather than discounted ones that can be found online.



Q: What is acceptable storage?

A: Storage for unit cleaning, spare linens, etc., is permitted. However, we ask that it is kept neat and orderly. Closets or rooms containing Air Conditioning units and water heaters should not be used to store brooms, mops, towels, etc. We ask that you try to store items no closer than 12” from these units. If this is not possible due to construction, we ask that you provide as much clearance as possible.

Note 1: Battery-powered, single-station smoke detectors, where used, shall be tested and inspected not less frequently than once per week. A log of the required tests and inspections shall be kept and available to the authority having jurisdiction at any time. This log shall include, but not be limited to, the following information and any other information as may be required by the authority having jurisdiction.

1. A list clearly identifying each individual detector by its physical location.
2. The date of each required test & inspection.
3. The identity and signature of the inspector.
4. The result of each test & inspection.
5. The completion date and form of any maintenance performed.
6. The completion date and form of any corrective measures taken for each improperly functioning device.
7. A copy of the manufacturer’s recommended maintenance schedule and procedures.

If the Fire District finds cause to believe that the requirements are not being fulfilled, detectors powered by the building’s electrical system shall be required.

Note 2: Per Section R314.3, Smoke alarms are required to be placed in the following locations:

1. In each sleeping room.
2. Outside each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms.
3. On each additional story of the dwelling, including basements and habitable attics and not including crawl spaces and uninhabitable attics. In dwellings or dwelling units with split levels and without an intervening door between the adjacent levels, a smoke alarm installed on the upper level shall suffice for the adjacent lower level, provided that the lower level is less than one full story below the upper level.
4. Smoke alarms shall be installed not less than 3 feet horizontally from the door or opening of a bathroom that contains a bathtub or shower unless this would prevent placement of a smoke alarm required by this section.