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2026 EDITION | CLIENT & PROPERTY OWNER GUIDE

ANNUAL FIRE SAFETY INSPECTION GUIDE

Service inspections, fire department visits, urgent violations and documented close-out.

For building owners, property managers, landlords and businesses in Ontario, including Toronto and the GTA.

> **The most important distinction**
>
> An inspection records equipment condition. Repairs correct the findings. Retesting confirms the result. A municipal fire department inspection assesses safety and compliance; it is a separate role.

This guide explains FC Fire's service process and Ontario fire department inspections. The accepted proposal defines contracted work. It is not a government-issued standard, technician's testing manual or blanket approval of a building.

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Our aim: clear findings, working protection, properly planned corrections and a record that shows what was completed.

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01 Agree the scope & prepare

A smooth inspection starts with a clear scope, suitable access and the right information before our technicians arrive.

Confirm exactly what is being booked

Identify every building address, unit, connected wing and system to be included. An inspection of one address does not automatically cover an adjoining property. Where a system serves more than one address, its shared components and reporting arrangement must be identified.

The proposal should distinguish the annual inspection from troubleshooting, repairs, replacement parts, special access equipment, additional trades and follow-up testing. A service excluded from the quote may still be required for the property; arrange it separately rather than treating it as unnecessary.

Please provide	Why it helps
Property details	Building use, number of storeys and units, operating hours, known equipment and any recent renovations or occupancy changes.
Existing records	Previous inspection reports, open deficiencies, relevant verification records, drawings, equipment information and the Fire Safety Plan where applicable.
Known concerns	Panel trouble signals, nuisance alarms, leaks, failed lighting, missing alarms, disconnected devices and any fire department notices or deadlines.
Site arrangements	A responsible contact, working keys and access credentials, tenant coordination, monitoring company details and any safety or access restrictions.

Reserve the right amount of time

We allocate inspection time using the expected equipment count, system complexity, building layout and access requirements. Larger or more complex properties may need multiple technicians, specialist attendance or more than one day. Any estimate depends on the information available when scheduling.

Arrange access and occupant notices

The owner or manager arranges lawful access and any required advance notices. Tell occupants when testing and suite access are expected, identify an authorized site representative, and provide a contact for access problems. Share sensitive entry information securely, not in public notices.

> **Before the appointment**
>
> Tell us about a serious existing fault immediately. A scheduled annual appointment is not a reason to leave an urgent fire safety issue unattended.

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02 On-site inspection procedure

The visit is organized around the applicable equipment and required tests, not simply a walk-through or the replacement of service tags.

1. Check in and review the starting condition

Our team confirms the property and agreed scope with the site contact, reviews available records, locates the equipment and notes existing faults or impairments before testing starts. Relevant equipment identification and the actual attendance details are recorded.

2. Coordinate the testing sequence

Before work that affects protection or building operations, the team coordinates with the authorized site contact, monitoring provider and other affected service providers as applicable. Required notifications and temporary safety arrangements are established before the affected work. [8]

Testing can involve audible alarms, flashing signals, simulated loss of power, water flow or operation of connected equipment. The sequence and any required specialist attendance are planned around the installed systems and the building's procedures.

3. Inspect and test the equipment

Technicians work systematically through the areas and equipment in scope, including common areas, stairs, service rooms and tenant spaces where devices require access. Applicable functions are tested using suitable methods and equipment. A visual check alone is not substituted for a required functional test.

4. Record results while on site

Record equipment locations and identification, observations, test results and required measurements. Note missing or damaged equipment, unsuccessful tests, access restrictions and any authorized corrections. Complete service tags where appropriate to the equipment and work actually performed.

5. Restore and confirm the operating condition

After testing, restore test-related isolations, controls, supplies and monitoring arrangements as applicable, and confirm the resulting system condition. If restoration is not possible, identify the impairment and follow the agreed safety and escalation procedure rather than describing the equipment as normal.

6. Give the site contact a clear handover

Explain what was inspected, what could not be completed, any urgent concerns, repairs performed and the next steps. Detailed reports follow the review of the site records; important safety concerns are communicated without waiting for the final report.

> **Occupant safety during testing**
>
> An announced test does not make every alarm harmless. Report signs of an actual emergency immediately, follow the building's emergency procedures and call 911 from a safe location for a fire or immediate danger.

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03 What the inspection may cover

Only the systems present and included in the agreed service scope are covered. This overview is not a substitute for the applicable technical checklist.

System or equipment	Typical inspection focus
Fire alarm system	Control equipment, annunciators, initiating devices, audible and visible notification, relevant circuits, supervision, power supplies and applicable interfaces. Include required battery testing and measured results, not just a visual battery check. The system-specific checklist determines the complete test scope. [4]
Emergency lighting and exit signs	Identify the power source, battery units, remote heads and applicable exit signs. Check condition and operation, perform the required duration testing, and assess charging/recovery as applicable. A short push-button test alone does not establish that the equipment can operate for its required duration. [1]
Portable fire extinguishers	Check equipment identification, location, accessibility, condition and relevant service information; complete applicable maintenance and records. Identify units requiring additional servicing, recharging, pressure testing or replacement. Annual maintenance is not the same as discharging every extinguisher. [7]
Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms	Check the alarms included in the scope for presence, condition, power, operation and replacement information. Identify whether they are local alarms or system-connected devices; testing the building fire alarm does not automatically establish the condition of every local alarm. [5,6]
Sprinklers, standpipes, pumps and hydrants	Apply the relevant inspection and test procedures to the installed water-based systems. Record equipment condition, applicable readings and test results; identify leaks, obstructions, damage and other concerns. Required activities and intervals vary by system. [7]
Kitchen suppression and special hazards	Arrange the appropriate system-specific service, including protected hazards, equipment condition, detection, manual operation and relevant interfaces. Identify servicing and cylinder-related work due. Kitchen suppression has its own service cycle; do not assume one annual building visit covers it. [7]

Other work needs an explicit scope

Fire doors, fire separations, dampers, emergency generators, smoke control, integrated systems testing, Fire Safety Plans, engineering and permit work may require separate assessment, qualified personnel or specialist attendance. Relevant alarm interfaces are addressed within the applicable alarm test; that does not mean every connected system has received its complete separate inspection. [4,8]

The owner remains responsible for arranging required work that is outside a particular service contract. [8]

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04 Time allowances & access

Inspection appointments reserve time for a defined task. Repair work needs enough time for diagnosis, installation, retesting and records as well.

What the scheduled time allows for

The planned attendance covers the inspection work: locating and accessing equipment, setting up tests, inspecting and testing, recording results, tagging where applicable, moving safely through the property and restoring the systems after testing. Report preparation and technical review continue after the site visit.

Occupied suites, multiple buildings, high ceilings, hidden equipment, locked rooms, missing records and unexpected system faults can extend the work. The scheduled duration is an estimate, not permission to shorten a required test or declare untested equipment satisfactory.

Why every repair is not performed immediately

A replacement part being in the service vehicle does not mean a repair can be completed within the inspection allowance. The correct part must be confirmed, access and authorization obtained, work carried out safely and the affected functions retested.

Several unplanned repairs can materially extend the visit and affect later appointments. Separately scheduling involved repairs protects the time needed to complete both the inspection and corrective work properly. Immediate safety concerns still take priority over routine scheduling.

When minor repairs may be accommodated

A straightforward correction may be possible during the inspection when the correct materials, appropriate qualifications, authorization and sufficient time are available. It must not compromise the required tests or safe restoration. Ask about agreeing a minor-repair authorization limit in advance; the actual arrangement belongs in the accepted service terms.

When equipment cannot be reached

Blocked, unsafe or unavailable access is recorded against the affected equipment or area. The owner and service provider agree what is needed next, which may include an escort, tenant access, a safe work platform or another qualified trade. No-access items are not marked as passed.

> **A useful example**
>
> If a battery unit is concealed above an inaccessible ceiling, working remote lamps alone do not prove that the unit passed its required inspection and duration test. Access and the remaining tests must be arranged before that work can be closed out.

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05 Findings, priorities & impairments

A clear report separates the completeness of the inspection from the condition of the equipment and the completion of repairs.

Status	What it means
Testing complete; satisfactory	The applicable tests in the stated scope were completed and the recorded results meet the applicable criteria. Documentation relates to that scope and testing date.
Testing complete; deficiencies found	The inspection and records can be complete even though repairs remain necessary. A completed report is not the same as a passed system.
Testing not complete	Some required work could not be performed or confirmed. The report identifies the affected equipment, reason and required follow-up. It is not presented as a complete passing inspection.
Impaired or urgent condition	An issue may affect essential protection and needs prompt escalation. This can exist alongside any of the other statuses; it is not merely an administrative label.

Separate deficiencies from recommendations

A deficiency describes an identified failure, missing requirement or other problem requiring correction. A recommendation identifies a proposed improvement or planning consideration and should state its basis. Optional improvements should not be presented as mandatory without support.

Findings should identify the equipment and location, explain the problem clearly, state the corrective action or further investigation needed, and distinguish confirmed facts from causes that still require diagnosis.

Act on urgent conditions promptly

Examples needing immediate assessment include a disabled fire alarm function, a closed fire protection water supply, failed required notification or a loss of essential protection. The response depends on the actual condition, affected occupants and applicable requirements; there is no universal safe waiting period.

The owner and qualified service provider must address alternate safety measures during a shutdown. Depending on the assessment and authority directions, these may involve notifications, a fire watch, restrictions on affected operations or urgent restoration. Use the building-specific procedure, not an improvised generic arrangement. [8]

> **A normal display is not a complete test**
>
> A panel displaying “normal” does not, by itself, prove that every device, circuit, battery or connected function works correctly. The required inspection and recorded tests establish the findings.

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06 Investigation & corrective repairs

An investigation establishes the cause of a fault. A repair addresses the confirmed problem. Follow-up testing establishes whether the affected functions perform correctly.

Agree the repair or investigation scope

The proposal should identify the known findings, planned work, labour allowance, anticipated materials, access requirements and exclusions. When the cause is unknown, an initial diagnostic scope may be the appropriate first step rather than a promise to repair everything for a fixed amount.

Prioritize the system that needs investigation

For a serious alarm fault, the first objective may be to trace the fault and determine whether the existing equipment can remain in service. Before testing, it may be unclear whether the remedy is a connection repair, a replacement device, new wiring or more extensive system work.

That investigation may use most or all of the scheduled attendance. Unrelated lighting, extinguisher or in-suite alarm repairs should not be assumed complete unless they were included, carried out and recorded. Resolving the main fault is an important outcome, but it does not automatically close every other deficiency.

Obtain authorization before expanding routine work

Where additional work is identified, explain the findings, proposed solution and cost implications before proceeding beyond the authorized scope, subject to any agreed emergency arrangements. Parts availability, specialist attendance, access, design or approvals may affect the repair schedule.

Carry out repairs and retest

Use appropriately qualified personnel and suitable, compatible equipment. Retest the repaired items and affected functions to the applicable requirements, including any broader testing or verification triggered by the work. Record what was changed, the actual repair date, results and anything still unresolved. [4]

Close each item with evidence

Cross-reference the follow-up record to the original deficiency. An invoice, ordered part or statement that a contractor attended is not, by itself, evidence of a successful functional retest. Work by another contractor needs suitable completion records and any required testing.

> **Keep the remaining items visible**
>
> After each visit, the handover should distinguish completed repairs, successful retests, pending parts, unresolved faults and access-dependent work. A successful visit should never be described in a way that hides remaining deficiencies.

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07 Reports, certificates & close-out

The final documentation should let an owner or reviewing authority understand the scope, actual results and remaining actions without having to reconstruct the work from emails.

What the documentation package should show

As applicable to the service, include the property identification, inspection dates, technician details, relevant standard or test basis, equipment and device records, required measurements, findings, inaccessible or untested items, authorized repairs and the resulting system condition.

The package may include separate fire alarm, emergency lighting, extinguisher, sprinkler or other system reports. Follow-up records should be linked to the original findings. Where several addresses share a system, the records must clearly identify the areas and equipment covered.

When a passing certificate can be issued

Where the relevant testing is complete and the results support a satisfactory outcome, FC Fire can issue the corresponding company inspection certificate with the completed report, subject to the applicable service terms. The certificate must identify the equipment or systems covered and must not imply that unresolved or untested work has passed.

Where deficiencies exist, issue accurate findings and the corrective-work record rather than an unrestricted passing statement. Once the necessary work and tests are completed successfully, provide the appropriate updated close-out documentation.

What a certificate does not mean

An FC Fire inspection certificate is not a Toronto Fire Services approval, a building occupancy permit or an automatic closure of a fire department notice. It is also not automatically a ULC certificate; ULC certificates belong to a separate certification program and can be issued only by appropriately listed companies. [4,9]

Reports support the owner's records and may be submitted to the relevant authority for review. No contractor can guarantee that an equipment inspection resolves unrelated construction, fire separation, fire door, egress, planning or permit issues. [7]

Protect the inspection history

Preserve the original findings. Show later repairs and retests with their actual dates instead of changing the original inspection to make it appear the equipment passed at that earlier visit. Where necessary, provide a clearly identified revision and maintain traceability.

Report release follows the accepted quotation and payment terms, subject to applicable legal duties. Urgent safety communications and legally required notices must not wait for routine administration.

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08 Responsibilities between annual visits

Annual service is one part of maintaining fire safety. The owner's ongoing program must also cover the checks, tests, maintenance and training due between contractor visits. [8]

Responsibility	Practical action
Owner or property manager	Arrange required services, respond to findings, provide access, appoint responsible staff and ensure outstanding items are followed through. Delegating a task does not remove the need to confirm it was completed. [8]
Designated building staff	Carry out only the routine duties for which they are trained and authorized. Keep the relevant logs, report changes promptly and know the emergency and impairment procedures. [8]
Tenants and occupants	Do not disable smoke or CO alarms. Report disconnected, inoperative or impaired alarms to the landlord promptly and follow the building's emergency instructions. [5,6]
Qualified service providers	Perform the contracted inspections, tests and repairs within their qualifications; document the results and communicate failures, limitations and necessary follow-up.

Maintain a property-specific service calendar

List each system, required task, interval, responsible person, last completion date, next due date and record location. The calendar should cover routine checks, monthly activities where applicable, annual testing, special service intervals and events such as tenant turnover or equipment changes.

Commercial kitchen suppression requires a separate service cycle, commonly every six months; the building's annual booking should not be treated as covering both visits. Sprinkler, pump, generator and special-hazard work can also have intervals other than annual. Confirm the applicable schedule for each installation. [7]

Keep the Fire Safety Plan and building information current

Where a Fire Safety Plan is required, review it at least annually and update it when relevant conditions change. Keep responsible contacts, equipment information, emergency duties and training current. Changes to the plan may need to be provided to the Chief Fire Official. [8]

> **Changes should trigger a review**
>
> Tell your service provider about renovations, new partitions, changed room use, relocated kitchen appliances, changes to heating or garage arrangements, and changes to fire protection equipment. Do not assume the previous inspection still describes an altered installation.

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09 Ontario 2026 reference notes

These are selected Ontario requirements and distinctions relevant to the process above. They are not an exhaustive code checklist or a statement that every listed requirement applies to every property.

Fire alarm inspection and verification are different

Ontario's 2026 referenced fire alarm standards include **CAN/ULC-S536-2019** for inspection and testing and **CAN/ULC-S537-2019** for verification, subject to Ontario-specific provisions. Apply the legally referenced edition and applicable Ontario modifications, not simply whichever edition is newest. [1-3]

Verification addresses installation or alteration work where required; it is not interchangeable with the recurring annual inspection. An annual visit does not replace project-specific verification, design, permits or integrated systems testing when those are required. [4]

Emergency lighting: use the required duration

For self-contained emergency lighting, the 2026 Code addresses monthly inspection and testing and testing at intervals not greater than 12 months for the duration required by the design criteria. Charging/recovery checks also apply. Do not assume a universal 30-minute duration. Relevant provisions are in Division B, Article **6.7.1.6**. [1]

Carbon monoxide coverage changed on January 1, 2026

Coverage expanded to include alarms adjacent to sleeping areas and on every storey of qualifying homes or units. Fuel-burning equipment, garage or service-room adjacency, certain heated-air arrangements and qualifying heated public corridors affect the requirements. Assess the actual building conditions rather than automatically repeating last year's alarm layout. [1,5]

Keep the necessary records at the building

The general retention rule is at least two years, while retaining at least the most recent and immediately preceding record of a given test or inspection. Initial verification or test reports for systems installed after November 21, 2007 must be retained for the life of the system. Electronic records are permitted when readily available to the Chief Fire Official. See Division B, Subsection **1.1.2**. [1]

Use personnel qualified for the work

Annual fire alarm tests and inspections require qualified personnel or qualified on-site supervision permitted by the Ontario Fire Code. Different systems and repair activities can require other qualifications. A fire alarm credential should not be treated as authority to perform every related trade task. [8]

Reference basis: Ontario Fire Code, O. Reg. 213/07, including the 2026 amendments, and the public guidance on pages 18-19. Confirm site-specific conditions and subsequent changes before relying on this guide for a project.

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10 Owner's checklist & common questions

Use this page before booking, during the handover and when reviewing the completed file.

Stage	Confirm the following
Before the visit	[ ] Every address and system is identified. [ ] Previous reports and open findings are available. [ ] Tenant notices, keys and a site representative are arranged. [ ] Monitoring details, known faults and authority deadlines are shared.
Before the team leaves	[ ] The current system condition has been explained. [ ] Untested or inaccessible items are identified. [ ] Urgent issues and necessary safety measures are understood. [ ] The next action, responsible person and timing are clear.
Before closing the file	[ ] Reports match the property and systems commissioned. [ ] Deficiencies are resolved or remain clearly tracked. [ ] Repairs have supporting records and required retests. [ ] Relevant certificates and next service dates are recorded.

“Does an annual inspection include all repairs?”

Not automatically. The accepted scope controls what was booked. Minor authorized corrections may fit within the visit; more involved repairs or investigations commonly require their own scope and time allowance.

“Does a completed report mean everything passed?”

No. A report can document a completed inspection with deficiencies. Check the results, testing limitations and outstanding-item list, not just the report title or presence of a service tag.

“Can I assume the whole building is now approved?”

No. Equipment inspection records describe the stated work and findings. Fire department review, construction issues, permits and other building responsibilities remain separate where applicable.

“Why was one fault fixed but other work remains?”

A return visit may have been authorized to investigate a specific system fault. Confirm what that attendance covered and use the follow-up record to identify any remaining work.

> **The three questions to ask after any visit**
>
> What was completed? What remains? What is the next action, and who is responsible for arranging it?

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11 Who is inspecting?

A qualified service contractor inspects, tests and repairs the equipment in the booked scope. A municipal fire-safety inspector assesses fire safety and enforces applicable requirements. Neither visit replaces the other.

SERVICE CONTRACTOR

Test and restore equipment

1. **INSPECT & TEST**
   Booked equipment and required tests
2. **DOCUMENT**
   Results, measurements and deficiencies
3. **REPAIR & RETEST**
   Authorized corrections and affected tests

You receive: technical reports and repair records. Contractors do not issue or cancel statutory department orders.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Assess safety and compliance

1. **INSPECT**
   Conditions, systems and relevant records
2. **REQUIRE CORRECTION**
   Risk assessment, directions or an order
3. **VERIFY COMPLIANCE**
   Evidence, follow-up and enforcement

You may receive: findings, directions or an order. Immediate safeguards and enforcement depend on the circumstances.

Different roles, one objective: working protection, safe escape and evidence that required work was completed.

Why the department may visit

A department visit may follow a complaint, request, fire, risk-based program or follow-up on previous findings. It is not automatically the annual equipment test you book with FC Fire. Firefighters also conduct education and alarm-assistance visits; ask which kind of visit is taking place. [9]

> **A contractor certificate does not close a municipal order**
>
> Technical service records can help demonstrate compliance. The department still decides whether its requirements have been met and whether follow-up is needed. [9,10]

12 What inspectors look for and request

The inspection follows the building's use, layout, occupants, systems and applicable requirements. Common concerns include:

- **Early warning:** required smoke and CO alarms present, correctly located, powered and working; required fire alarm functions maintained.
- **Escape:** accessible exits and stairs, usable exit doors, required lighting and signs, and hazards that obstruct escape.
- **Fire containment:** required fire doors, closures and separations; damage or alterations that allow smoke and fire to spread.
- **Protection and access:** extinguishers and water-based systems, accessible fire equipment and fire routes, and storage or ignition hazards.
- **Management:** required inspections, tests, maintenance, Fire Safety Plans, trained staff duties and unresolved deficiencies.

In a house, rental suite or multi-unit residential property, relevant areas may include dwellings as well as common stairs, corridors, basements, service rooms and exterior access. The purpose is fire safety, not an unrestricted search for unrelated matters. The Ontario Fire Code determines which requirements apply. [1,10]

Have a readable inspection file ready

Depending on the building and concern, relevant requests can include recent system inspection and test reports, repair and retest evidence, smoke/CO alarm maintenance records, the required Fire Safety Plan and logs, original verification reports, and drawings or information explaining the current layout and use. Share previous orders, open findings and changes affecting protection.

Inspectors can legally demand documents relevant to the inspection and ask relevant questions. People holding requested records must produce them and provide reasonably necessary help to make them readable. Electronic records must be readily available; a certificate or invoice alone may not show the tests or corrections completed. See FPPA section 19 and Fire Code Subsection 1.1.2. [1,10]

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13 Powers and residential visits

Ontario's Fire Protection and Prevention Act (FPPA) gives statutory fire-safety inspectors significant powers. A residential address is not a blanket exemption. The authority depends on the type of visit and the provision being used. [10]

Official inspection: section 19

An inspector may enter and inspect land and premises without a warrant at reasonable times to assess fire safety. On request, the inspector must identify themselves and explain the purpose. Relevant powers include examining and demanding documents, conducting tests, taking samples and photographs, and asking questions. Removed documents or items are subject to the Act's access and return requirements.

Obstructed inspection: section 20

If entry or inspection powers are denied, obstructed or expected to be, a justice of the peace can issue a warrant on the statutory grounds. That warrant can authorize necessary force. Section 19 is not a general power to force entry whenever convenient.

Immediate threat to life: section 15

Where the specified official has reasonable grounds that a fire risk poses an immediate threat to life, warrantless urgent action can include removing people, a fire watch, temporary smoke alarms or extinguishers, minor system repairs and other urgently required measures. Necessary force may be used. The Act requires notice of the action and a posted copy as specified.

Orders and review: sections 21-25

Inspectors can order fire-safety measures and correction of Code violations. A formal order sets out the reasons, required action, compliance time and review or appeal rights. Closure under section 21(2) requires Fire Marshal approval; emergency section 15 action has its own legal test. Structural repair orders are also subject to section 22's limits.

An ordinary inspector's section 21 order generally has a 15-day written Fire Marshal review window under section 25. Use the stated process promptly. Clarify the status of any deadline or stay; disagreement is not permission to leave an immediate danger unaddressed.

These powers are tied to fire safety and statutory conditions; private service contractors do not receive the same rights. A voluntary home-safety campaign is different: Whitby's Ever Alert campaign says residents do not have to invite firefighters inside. Ask for identification, the purpose and the authority being used; confirm uncertain details with the department. [10,14]

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14 Smoke alarms: act immediately

Missing, damaged, disconnected or unable to operate?

A failed required smoke alarm is a serious life-safety failure. Restore the required protection immediately. Do not wait for the next annual visit, routine repair round or future report. [6,11,12]

Toronto explicitly tells landlords to install or replace required smoke alarms immediately. Tenants should report a failed alarm promptly and must not disable it. An officer who discovers the failure may require immediate correction, record the violation and arrange follow-up or enforcement. [11,12]

The response considers occupied sleeping areas, how much warning protection is missing, other hazards and the history of non-compliance. Emergency powers require their own legal test; an alarm defect must be assessed in context. Correcting the alarm does not automatically prevent a charge for the violation that existed. [10]

Why firefighters may install an alarm during the visit

Fire services sometimes provide or install alarms themselves. Under FPPA section 15, temporary smoke alarms are expressly permitted safeguards when the immediate-threat-to-life test is met. Emergency work may also lead to statutory cost recovery; it is not necessarily free. The reason and conditions matter: this is not a promise that every department will supply every required alarm. [10]

If an officer installs an alarm to address a hazardous finding, take it seriously: essential warning protection was absent or inadequate, and remaining work or enforcement may still follow. A temporary alarm does not automatically satisfy permanent power, interconnection, location or other applicable requirements. Ask what still needs correction and how compliance will be confirmed.

A local assistance example

Burlington's Alarm Assistance Program offers eligible homeowners firefighter visits to install or replace battery-operated alarms as needed. It supports qualifying older adults or people with disabilities or limited mobility who lack a support network. It is not a general rental-property replacement service. A voluntary installation does not by itself mean the owner is being prosecuted. [13]

The owner's responsibility continues in either case. Hardwired or interconnected equipment needs a suitable, compatible solution and appropriately qualified installation. Do not assume a loose battery alarm replaces the required arrangement.

A Toronto tenant whose landlord has not provided working required alarms can contact 311 for referral to Toronto Fire Services. This is the non-emergency inspection route; use 911 for an emergency. [6]

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15 Urgent findings: protect and correct

1 PROTECT
Address immediate danger and follow required temporary measures.

→

2 CORRECT
Complete permanent work and the affected tests.

→

3 CONFIRM
Provide records, follow up and confirm remaining obligations.

Restoring protection does not erase a past offence or automatically close a department file.

Owner and tenant next steps

1. Report and assess promptly. Identify the location and failure; tell the owner or manager. If a smoke or CO alarm gives an emergency warning, or there is fire, smoke or immediate danger, leave immediately, follow the building's emergency procedures and call 911 from outside or another safe location.
2. Restore protection immediately. Arrange safe correction or replacement, suitable installation and testing. Follow manufacturer instructions and fire department directions.
3. Document and check the rest. Record date, location, model and test result; check other required alarms and address permanent work.
4. Confirm follow-up. Provide requested proof and confirm whether re-inspection or other action is required. A contractor visit does not automatically close an order.

Examples requiring urgent assessment

Illustrative responses, not official severity grades or grace periods. Risks vary with occupants and circumstances; correction and prosecution can occur together. [1,10,16]

1. Missing or failed required smoke alarm
Priority: Immediate restoration of early warning in an occupied home or suite.
Possible response: Immediate correction, a recorded violation and follow-up or charges; temporary safeguards where the emergency legal test is met. Low replacement cost does not make the failure minor.

2. Blocked or unusable required exit
Priority: Restore safe escape promptly, especially if it is the only usable route.
Possible response: Remove the obstruction or correct the door. Restrictions or urgent removal of occupants may be necessary where legally warranted.

3. Disabled fire alarm or closed sprinkler supply
Priority: Immediate impairment assessment and restoration; many occupants may be affected.
Possible response: Required notifications, assessed alternate measures such as a directed fire watch or use restrictions, and urgent repair/testing. Measures are building-specific.

16 Other findings and enforcement

These examples explain risk and possible responses. They are illustrations, not official severity grades or guaranteed grace periods. One problem can become more urgent when it affects the only exit, sleeping occupants or several layers of protection. Immediate correction and prosecution can occur together. [1,10,16]

4. Required fire door wedged open or not closing
Priority: Restore containment promptly. A compromised stair enclosure can create a serious escape hazard.
Possible response: Remove the wedge, assess and repair the closure, verify operation and address related damage. An order or enforcement may follow; this is not merely cosmetic.

5. Overdue required test or missing service records
Priority: Promptly establish whether required work occurred and whether the equipment is reliable.
Possible response: Produce records or complete required testing, correct failures and meet the inspector's deadline. A normal panel display cannot fill the evidence gap. Unknown protection can warrant greater urgency.

6. Optional improvement with no identified violation
Priority: Plan the improvement according to its stated benefit and actual risk.
Possible response: A recommendation and planned work. First confirm it is optional; required equipment, an overdue statutory task or an order cannot be relabelled as an upgrade.

Safety action and legal consequences are separate

A department may educate, document a finding, issue directions or an order, re-inspect, use an applicable administrative penalty process, or lay charges. A warning or repair deadline is not guaranteed before prosecution. Repeated violations, ignored orders, deliberate disabling, danger and the facts can affect enforcement. Courts determine penalties on conviction; municipal service fees and emergency cost recovery differ from court fines. See FPPA sections 28-35. [10]

A documented severe outcome

Brampton reported in August 2026 that a landlord was convicted of seven offences after a fatal 2023 fire involving an unpermitted conversion and fire separation and smoke/CO alarm violations. The sentence included 135 days of custody, $50,000 in fines, $10,000 in victim surcharges and two years' probation. This was a specific, serious case, not an automatic sentence for every alarm defect. [15]

PUBLIC REFERENCES | DOCUMENT DETAILS

Sources and reference basis

The workflow sections describe FC Fire's service process and client coordination. The numbered references support Ontario requirements and technical distinctions. They do not imply government endorsement of FC Fire or this guide.

[1] Ontario e-Laws | Fire Code, O. Reg. 213/07
Consolidation effective January 1, 2026. Equipment testing, alarm requirements and record retention.
https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/070213

[2] Ontario e-Laws | O. Reg. 303/25: Fire Code
Amendments to inspection/testing provisions and the referenced fire alarm standard.
https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r25303

[3] Ontario e-Laws | O. Reg. 87/25: Fire Code
2026 amendments, including referenced standards and other fire safety requirements.
https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r25087

[4] UL Solutions in Canada | Fire and Security Alarm Certificate Programs
Inspection versus verification, integrated testing and the separate ULC certificate program.
https://canada.ul.com/ulcprograms/fireandsecurityalarmcertificateprograms/

[5] Toronto Fire Services | Carbon Monoxide Alarms
2026 coverage guidance and landlord/tenant responsibilities.
https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/public-safety-alerts/safety-tips-prevention/safety-equipment-devices/carbon-monoxide-alarms/

[6] Toronto Fire Services | Smoke Alarms
Smoke alarm maintenance, responsibilities and non-emergency inspection assistance.
https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/public-safety-alerts/safety-tips-prevention/safety-equipment-devices/smoke-alarms/

[7] City of Barrie Fire & Emergency Service | Fire Inspections & Permits
Equipment service records, kitchen suppression cycles and municipal inspection distinctions.
https://www.barrie.ca/services-payments/emergency-services/barrie-fire/fire-inspections-permits

[8] Ontario Municipal Fire Prevention Officers Association | Fire Code Compliance for Businesses
Owner duties, qualified personnel, alternate safety measures and Fire Safety Plan review.
https://omfpoa.com/fire-code-compliance-businesses/

[9] Toronto Fire Services | Request a Fire Inspection or Service
The separate municipal inspection and service request process.
https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/public-safety-alerts/fire-prevention-inspection-enforcement/request-a-fire-inspection-or-service

PUBLIC REFERENCES | DOCUMENT DETAILS

Sources and contact information

[10] Ontario e-Laws | Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997
Sections 15, 19-25 and 28-35: urgent action, entry, inspection, warrants, orders, review and enforcement.
https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/97f04

[11] City of Toronto | Give a Beep smoke alarm guidance
Immediate installation or replacement of required smoke alarms and occupant responsibilities.
https://www.toronto.ca/news/city-of-toronto-asks-residents-to-give-a-beep-about-smoke-alarms/

[12] City of Toronto 311 | Smoke alarm responsibilities
Landlord and tenant smoke alarm responsibilities.
https://www.toronto.ca/home/311-toronto-at-your-service/find-service-information/article/?kb=kA06g000001cvWPCAY

[13] City of Burlington | Alarm Assistance Program
Eligibility and firefighter assistance with battery-operated alarms.
https://www.burlington.ca/en/fire-and-emergency-services/alarm-assistance-program.aspx

[14] Town of Whitby | Ever Alert campaign
Voluntary home-safety visits; residents need not invite firefighters inside.
https://www.whitby.ca/news/posts/whitby-fire-launches-everalert-in-whitby/

[15] City of Brampton | Official conviction report, August 2026
A specific fatal-fire prosecution, offences and sentence.
https://www1.brampton.ca/EN/City-Hall/News/Pages/News-Release.aspx/1709

[16] City of Mississauga | Report a Fire Code violation
Risk-based priority, inspections and responses to Fire Code violations.
https://www.mississauga.ca/services-and-programs/health-and-safety/fire-and-emergency-services/report-a-fire-code-violation/

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This guide does not certify an individual property and is not legal advice. Applicable law, manufacturer instructions, technical standards, authority directions and the accepted service scope determine the work for each installation.