Bennett-Watkins Fire Rescue

District Office: 303-644-3572 Fax: 303-644-3401
355 4th Street, Bennett, CO 80102
Email: LifeSafety@BennettFireRescue.org
"Striving to Preserve Life and Property"

25 Most Common International Fire Code (IFC) Violations for Businesses

Dear Business Owner,

In an effort to better serve you and help you to prevent fire hazards in your business, the following information is provided to you on behalf of Bennett-Watkins Fire Rescue. A list of the 25 Most Common International Fire Code (IFC 2018) Violations can assist you in eliminating potential fire hazards in your business and staying in compliance with the fire code. Should you have any questions concerning this information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Victoria Flamini
Fire Marshal
Bennett-Watkins Fire Rescue
(303) 644-3572
Email: VictoriaFlamini@BennettFireRescue.org

1. **Address Identification.** Numbers shall be provided for all new and existing buildings in such a position as to be plainly visible and legible from the street or road fronting the property. Numbers shall be a minimum of 4" high, with a contrasting background. *(IFC 505.1)*

2. **Combustibles too Close to the Ceiling.** In buildings with sprinklers, combustibles are to be at least 18" from the ceiling and any sprinkler head. In buildings without sprinklers, the minimum distance to the ceiling is 24" (2-feet). Also, do not store combustibles under unprotected stairways. *(IFC 315.3.1)*

3. **Combustibles Too Close to Heat Producing Devices.** Keep combustibles a minimum of 30" from a propane or natural gas appliance and 18" from an electrical appliance. Keep combustibles at least six inches from baseboard heaters. Appliances include furnaces and water heaters, and portable heaters. *(IFC 305.1)*

4. **Cooking Hood and Duct Cleaning.** Hoods, grease-removal devices, fans, ducts, and other appurtenances shall be cleaned at intervals necessary to prevent the accumulation of grease. Cleanings shall be recorded, and records shall state the extent, time, and date of cleaning. Records shall be kept on the premises. *(IFC 607.3.3)*

5. **Cooking Hood and Duct Extinguishing System.** Dry chemical extinguishing systems shall be inspected and tested for proper operation at 6 month intervals. Clean agent systems shall be inspected and tested at 12 month intervals. *(IFC 906.1)*

6. **Means of Egress.** Combustible materials shall not be stored in exits or exit enclosures. *(IFC 315.3.2)*

7. **Electrical Panels.** A working space of not less than 30" in width, 36" in depth, and 78" in height shall be provided in front of electrical service equipment. The working space shall not be less than the width of the panel. Cover holes in electrical panels with blank plastic covers. Do not place tape over circuit breakers (*IFC 605.3)*. Electrical rooms shall be identified. *(IFC 604.3)*

8. **Emergency Lights.** The bulb or bulbs must be lit when the test button is pushed. If the light(s) do not work, the battery may need to be replaced or other repairs performed. All emergency lighting should be tested monthly and written logs of these tests shall be maintained on site. *(IFC 604.5.1.1)*

9. **Exit Signs.** All bulbs in exit signs need to function. Many exit signs are equipped with a battery back-up in case of loss of power. Push the test button on the side or bottom of the exit sign to check if the battery and D/C lights are operating. If not, it is likely the battery needs replacing and not the bulbs. *(IFC 1011.5)*

10. **Extension Cords.** Extension cords are for temporary use only and are not to be used in lieu of permanent wiring. They may be used for up to 90 days or unplugged when not in use. Extension cords cannot pass through doorways, walls, floors, or ceilings, nor under floor coverings unless protected in conduit. Extension cords shall be used only with portable appliances and grounded. Extension cords shall show no signs of damage and not be plugged into each other. *(IFC 604.5)*

11. **Extinguishers.** Service must be performed annually by a licensed fire extinguisher contractor. Most businesses need a minimum 2A size/type extinguisher for every 3,000 square feet. Occupants need to always be within 75 feet walking travel distance of an extinguisher. Extinguishers need to be mounted with an approved bracket three to five feet off of the floor in a highly visible and accessible location that is not physically or visually obstructed. *(IFC 906.2)*

12. **Fire Alarm Systems.** A local (unmonitored) system needs to be serviced quarterly. A monitored (alarm company calls you and the fire department) system needs to be serviced annually. *(IFC 907.8 & NFPA 72)*

13. **Fire-rated Doors.** These self-closing doors shall not be blocked open, obstructed, nor made inoperable. *(IFC 705.2.3)*

14. **Fire Sprinkler Systems.** These systems need annual servicing. A maintenance tag is required to be placed on the sprinkler system. Keep a clear access to the riser and do not store items within three feet of riser system. A sprinkler head cabinet needs to be mounted next to the riser, containing a sprinkler head wrench and a minimum of six spare sprinkler heads. *(IFC 901.6, NFPA 25.5.4.1)*

15. **Key Box.** If there is a key box (also known as a Knox Box) for your business, provide a current working key. *(IFC 506.2)*

16. **Obstructed Exits.** Exit areas and means of egress should be kept free from all obstructions that would prevent its use. This includes the accumulation of snow and ice. *(IFC 1030.2.1)*

17. **Open Junction Boxes.** Open junction boxes and open-wiring splices shall be prohibited. Approved covers shall be provided for all switch and electrical outlet boxes. *(IFC 604.1)*

18. **Piggy-backed Surge Protectors.** Surge protectors (power taps) shall not be plugged into each.

They shall be equipped with over-current protection and must be plugged into an outlet. *(IFC 604.4.2)*

19. **Pressurized Cylinders.** Cylinders or tanks, whether empty or full, need to be chained/secured in such a way so they cannot tip over. *(IFC 5303.5.3)*

20. **Signage.** On doors to sprinkler riser room or to the fire alarm panel, place "Riser Room" or "FACP" (Fire Alarm Control Panel) sign on door, using a minimum of two inch red letters. *(IFC 509.1)*

21. **Sprinkler Heads.** There needs to be a minimum of 18" clearance around sprinkler heads. *(IFC 315.3.1)*

22. **Storage in Equipment/Electrical Rooms.** Combustible material shall not be stored in boiler rooms, mechanical rooms, elevator rooms, or electrical equipment rooms. *(IFC 315.3.3)*

23. **Thumb-Turn Deadbolts.** This type of deadbolt is against the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for exit doors in public places. Exit doors are to remain unlocked during business hours. *(IFC 1010.1.9.4)*

24. **Unprotected Ceilings.** Keep ceiling tiles in place or replace when damaged. Fire spreads rapidly through holes or openings in ceilings. Ceiling tiles are a part of your fire resistance-rated ceiling. Seal all holes in ceilings and walls and keep attic-access lids in place. *(IFC 703.1)*

25. **Waste Accumulation.** Combustible waste material, creating a fire hazard, shall not be allowed to accumulate in buildings or structures or upon premises. *(IFC304.1)*

Bennett-Watkins Fire Rescue - Striving to Preserve Life and Property

About the International Fire Code (IFC)

Bennett-Watkins Fire Rescue, Adams County, or the Town of Bennett adopts fire code by resolution or ordinance. The current adopted code can be found in the District's website. A free online version of the IFC can be found on the International Code Council website. For questions about any of these code requirements visit our website at www.BennettFireRescue.org or contact the Department's Community Risk Reduction Division at CRRDivision@BennettFireRescue.org or (303) 644-3572.