



Austin Fire Department

Emergency Prevention Division / Fire Marshall's Office

Permitting and Development Center

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<http://www.austintexas.gov/fireinspections>

Adoption and Foster Care Inspection Guidelines:

State regulations require that persons applying for approval to become Adoptive or Foster parents receive a fire safety inspection of the home.

Please use this checklist to prepare for your Fire Safety Inspection:

- 1. Address Numbers:** *must* be clearly visible from the street. ○ The numbers need to be on the front of the home as opposed to painted on the curb where they can be easily blocked by parked vehicles or vegetation.
 - Exception may be made for rural homes which are not visible from the street. In this case address numbers must be posted on mailbox, visible from each direction of approach.
- 2. Security Bars & Bedroom Windows** ○ Any means to open the window, and any security bars that may be present, must be operational from the inside of the room without the use of keys or tools.
 - Security bars covering required emergency exits must have "quick release" mechanisms.
 - Each bedroom should have at least one operable window with a minimum clear opening of 24 inches high by 20 inches wide.
- 3. Locks:** Thumb-turn deadbolts, night latches, security chains, surface mounted slide bolts and flush mounted bolts are allowable.

- Double key dead bolts, the type that requires a key to unlock from the inside, are *not* permitted.

4. Smoke Detectors: *must* be provided in each bedroom and in the corridor/hallway adjoining the bedrooms.

- A room designed to be used as a bedroom but currently used for other purposes, i.e. office, must still comply with this requirement.
- In addition to those required in sleeping rooms, in multi-story homes a smoke detector to cover the upper floor(s), must be located at the top of the stairs.
- There should be means available (step stool, stick, etc.) for the inspector to test the function of the smoke detectors, especially in the case of vaulted ceilings.

5. Carbon Monoxide Detector: *must* be installed in all residences with gas or propane powered appliances, fireplace (natural or gas), attached garage. ○ One CO Detector is required in the hallway outside of the sleeping areas on each level. Please follow Manufacturer's Instructions for guidance with installation. See this link for information: <https://www.austintexas.gov/page/carbon-monoxide-safety>

6. Fire Extinguishers :

- In one story single family homes a Fire Extinguisher of at least a **2A: 10BC** rating should be mounted in a readily accessible location. Often this is under the kitchen sink, a pantry, a utility room, or even near the garage pedestrian door if the door is readily accessible to the kitchen area. No matter the location, residents need to be made aware of the extinguisher's location.
- In two-story single family homes, a minimum of a **1A: 10BC** rated Extinguisher should be mounted upstairs in a readily accessible location. This is in addition to the **2A: 10BC** rated Extinguisher previously described.
- Unless purchased within the preceding 12 months, each Fire Extinguisher should have an inspection tag showing that it has been serviced within the past 12 months. If an extinguisher has been purchased within the past 12 months, a sales receipt must be presented showing date of purchase. There are several companies in the greater Austin area that provide annual fire extinguisher inspections.
- Multi-family rental homes protected by *automatic fire sprinkler systems* are allowed to use the fire extinguisher provided by Management to meet this requirement.

7. Gas powered water heater & HVAC (Heating, ventilation and air conditioning):

- a.** Gas powered HVAC and water heaters areas will be checked for improper storage and intact vent exhaust pipes.

- No chemicals stored in the closets or combustible items stored within 24" of the units.

- b.** Gas water heater installed before 2003 in enclosed garages should be at least 18 inches above floor level so flammable vapors cannot collect around the water heater.

- c.** Gas water heater installed after 2003 should be a FVIR Model and are allowed to be floor mounted. See this link for information:

<http://www.nachi.org/blog/2009/08/flammable-vapor-ignition-resistant-fvwater-heater/>

8. Miscellaneous Items:

- Areas around and behind clothes dryers will be checked for accumulations of lint. Dryer vent duct hose should be inspected and cleaned annually to prevent fires.
- Gasoline stored in attached garages must be kept in approved containers.
- Any other chemicals present must be properly stored.
- Areas around electrical panels shall be clear of any combustible and flammable materials. As per the fire code, a working space of not less than 30 inches shall be maintained.
- Cover holes/openings in electrical panels with blank plastic covers. Do not place tape over circuit breakers.
- These rules for electrical panels apply to both interior and exterior installations.
- Combustible items shall not be stored within 24 inches of the ceiling for non-sprinklered residences and 18 inches for residences equipped with sprinklers.
- Extension cords are for temporary use only and shall not be used as permanent wiring. Extension cords shall show no signs of damage and shall not be plugged into each other and/or surge protector type devices.
- Sheetrock shall be checked for openings/damage/holes. Sheetrock provides fire resistance and any openings provide a pathway for fire to spread rapidly. Openings shall be covered and damage repaired prior to inspection.