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Business Fire Safety Inspection Program Changes

Working with local businesses to reduce costs and raise fire safety awareness

Covington, Wash. - Date - Beginning April 1st, 2011, the Kent Fire Department Regional Fire Authority in partnership with the City of Covington will implement changes to the fire inspection program to reduce costs while ensuring that businesses meet the applicable fire and life safety codes. This is accomplished by the creation of a self-inspection program and the consolidation of inspection activities onto one permit.

The self-inspection program is being offered to Covington businesses which are protected by automatic fire sprinkler systems. These businesses are statistically at a lower risk of a catastrophic fire. Examples of this type of business include: small offices, mercantile, salons, etc. Again, this is a voluntary self-inspection program and will be for odd numbered years. On even numbered years the business will still be visited by a fire inspector for a traditional on-site inspection.

The program is simple and has several advantages over a traditional inspection. The participating business will receive a self-inspection packet which will include an introductory letter, the Self-Inspection Form, and a return envelope to be mailed back once the inspection is complete. Businesses simply answer questions on the form concerning the conditions of that particular business. Any unsafe conditions will be identified on the form and provide the business with the information necessary to correct the violation. Once any violations have been corrected or if there were no violations, the Self-Inspection Form is signed and dated and sent back to the fire department.

The benefits of the self-inspection program:

1. There is no charge to the business to participate
2. Savings of the traditional inspection fee
3. Provides life safety education in the identification of unsafe conditions
4. Less business interruption
5. Allows business to conduct self-inspection at their convenience
6. Supports a safe and healthy business community

The consolidation of inspection activities onto one permit, which includes site and business related items, will eliminate the need for the site specific permit and the associated fees.

The Kent Fire Department RFA continues to work hard to provide residents and businesses with the most efficient and cost effective fire and life safety protection possible. These program changes are another example of those efforts.

For further information, please contact Fire Marshal Jon Napier at 253-856-4400.

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